

US activists look back at his first year and plan to stop his second >>Pages 10&11

Trump: Year one of the 'stable genius'



Truth about the ruling class 'hero' who hated the working class >>Pages 14&15

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CARILLION COLLAPSE SHOWS PRIVATISATION HAS TO GO...

KICK OUT ALL THE FAT CATS

THE COLLAPSE of Carillion, one of Britain's biggest outsourcing firms, shows everything that's wrong with privatisation.

The company's bosses collected vast fortunes from driving down public service standards and squeezing workers.

Now they have left behind job losses, half-finished hospitals and thousands of workers uncertain about their future. Some were already being sacked on Tuesday.

The Tories colluded with Carillion bosses right up to the end by handing them contracts. Now they expect taxpayers to pick up the bill.

The Tories started the Private Finance Initiative schemes that fattened Carillion in the 1990s. They mushroomed under New Labour.

It isn't just one scheme that's wrong. The whole project of handing services to profiteers has to go. Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn

ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS



was right to say that this has to be a "watershed moment".

He said it's time to "put an end to the rip-off policies that have done serious damage to our public services and fleeced taxpayers of billions of pounds".

That means renationalising public services and halting all sell-offs.

It also means fighting job losses and not giving a penny to the guilty bosses and bankers.

MAKE BOSSES AND BANKERS PAY >>PAGE 4

HEALTH SERVICE

Becky Romero's mother backs 3 Feb NHS demo

THE MOTHER of Becky Romero, a 15 year old who died last July because of mental health cuts, has slammed underfunding of services as "utterly shameful".

She has called on people to join the demonstration for the NHS on 3 February in London. The demonstration is a key opportunity to build resistance.

>>Page 20

TUNISIA



Protests erupt on anniversary of revolution

THOUSANDS of Tunisians joined angry demonstrations last Sunday. They are the latest phase of a revolt against austerity, corruption and political exclusion.

The protests took place on the seventh anniversary of a revolution that brought down president Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali.

>>Page 3

LABOUR

Corbyn caves into pressure as ally Williamson goes

THE LABOUR Party's left wing leadership has shown serious signs of accommodating to the right and big business in a bid to appear respectable.

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn effectively sacked left wing MP Chris Williamson last week.

>>Page 6



THE THINGS THEY SAY

'I'm still left with more than anybody else, and that seems to me entirely just'

Radio 4 presenter **John Humphrys** defends his huge salary

'There are some disadvantages to crowns'

The queen whines on

'Blame Left's hysteria'

The Daily Mail on Trump's cancelled visit

'A witchhunt on a ludicrous scale'

Mail columnist **Helena Frith-Powell** on those resisting sexual abuse and harassment

'It's a cheery expression of appreciation'

Tory Ann Widdecombe loves wolf whistling

'Why has the state found itself so dependent on a few very large outsourcing firms?'

George Osborne in 2018

It is great to see companies like Carillion winning contracts

George Osborne in 2014



Judge concerned that pigs get a fair cop on collusion

THERE WERE dramatic scenes in Belfast High Court last week. Justice Bernard McCloskey had been expected to quash a report by Dr Michael Maguire's police ombudsman's office relating to the Royal Ulster Constabulary investigation into the Loughinisland massacre.

On 18 June 1994 six Catholic men were murdered in a tiny rural Northern Ireland pub.

Five others were wounded.

The report released by the watchdog last June found that some cops had colluded with the Loyalist UVF gunmen responsible for the attack.

The Retired Police Officers Association had challenged the report.

In December Justice McCloskey delivered a damning assessment of the ombudsman investigation saying he had gone beyond his statutory powers in reaching conclusions which were "unsustainable in law".

McCloskey found the police had been subjected to "destructive and withering



The scene of the massacre

condemnations" without the protection of due process.

Former Assistant Chief Constable Raymond White and retired officer Thomas Hawthorne had taken the judicial review into the ombudsman's findings.

The case was adjourned for a week

to allow further submissions about what was described in court as a "significant issue".

There was little in the way of detail forthcoming about the issue.

Justice McCloskey had previously represented the Police Officers Association in a similar case in 2003 which sought to quash a report by a former ombudsman into findings of RUC collusion in the Omagh bombing.

While that challenge was unsuccessful one of the complainants named in the case was Raymond White.

Troublemaker understands that lawyers for both the ombudsman and the victim's families have raised questions in relation to this.

The record of a barrister's cases is of course no guide to his or her conduct as a judge.

Barristers make the strongest case they can for one side or the other but when they become judges they switch immediately to a position of independent impartiality.

POSH SHOP Waitrose was forced to take tins of luxury coffee off its shelves last week because they showed images of black plantation workers. Saquella's 1856 coffee tins included an illustration showing black labourers harvesting beans in Guatemala—watched over by a white plantation owner. Waitrose said it was "sorry for any offence caused".

STRIKES could delay the delivery of £200 million polar research vessel "Boaty McBoatface". Some 500 workers in the GMB union will walk out on 26 and 29 January after rejecting a pay deal. It means the craft officially named the RSS Sir David Attenborough will be delayed.

Tories love animals or shooting them

THE TORIES have been getting keen on animals recently. Lots of tweets about Blue Planet and Theresa May likes bird watching—rather than David Cameron's pig related interests.

But in contrast take Tory MP Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, treasurer of the party's 1922 Committee, to whom May gave a knighthood in the New Year's Honours in order to shore up her position.

The latest edition of the register of MPs' interests shows Clifton-Brown has been on a shooting jolly with bloodsports lobbyists.

The British Association for Shooting and

Conservation kindly gave the MP a night's hospitality and a days shooting on 15 December.

He and three other members of the 1922 Committee have previously been on shooting trips and Tory MP Jonathan Djanogly is also the chairman of the British Shooting Sports Council.

Geoffrey Clifton-Brown

Ukip shocked at racism in the party

POOR UKIP leader Henry Bolton has dumped his girlfriend Jo Marney after discovering in a tabloid newspaper that she was a racist.

Texts sent by Marney included comments that the "black American" Meghan Markle would "taint" the royal family.

And that women refugees arriving in the UK would "fuck a mangy dog for about ten quid and a Big Mac".

Clearly Bolton felt his job threatened—racist statements are his job.

For instance, "Multiculturalism is swamping or displacing our own British culture." Or immigration is "overwhelming"

Newly single

public services.

NIGEL FARAGE is being docked half his £7,535 a month MEP salary until October after being accused of misspending EU cash.

The ex-Ukip chief will have to repay a £35,500 debt to Brussels.

Hogan Howe

Former cop pic cost £7,460

THE Metropolitan Police has spent £7,460 on its ex-chief's retirement portrait despite him claiming "warning lights were flashing" over funding.

Lord Bernard Hogan-Howe bowed out with an estimated £6 million pension pot.

He took early retirement from his commissioner post last February.

The force said, "As a long-running tradition, a portrait is commissioned for every commissioner."

Go faster cops get let off

A COP doing 98mph in a 30mph zone was let off. It was one of thousands of speed offences by officers that went unpunished by one of Britain's biggest forces.

There were 3,218 non emergency speed offences in Thames Valley Police cars in 2016.

Only 29 resulted in the driver being hit with a fixed penalty notice or a court summons.

Dominic Raab

Tory minister lies shock

HERE'S HOPING new housing minister Dominic Raab knows more about houses than he does hospitals.

On the BBC's Question Time on last Thursday, he claimed there were "more beds than ever" available in the NHS.

He added, "We've got more beds, more doctors, more flu vaccines available than ever before."

But NHS England figures show there were 17,000 fewer beds available in the past three months than in April to June of 2010—dropping from 144,455 to 127,614.

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Protests erupt in Tunisia on anniversary of revolt

by JAOUHAR TOUNSI in Tunisia

THOUSANDS OF Tunisians joined angry demonstrations last Sunday in the latest phase of a revolt against austerity, corruption and political exclusion.

The protests took place on the seventh anniversary of a revolution that brought down dictator president Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali.

Government-approved marches saw people chant, “The country is rising up while the government celebrates the revolution”.

Widespread demonstrations erupted in early January.

Hundreds of angry protesters took to the streets in at least 20 different towns in protest against the newly passed Finance Act. This raised taxes and prices of fuel, housing and a wide range of other goods.

The 2018 austerity budget will make mass unemployment, poverty and social inequality worse.

This revolt is an echo of demonstrations two years ago against mass unemployment and corruption. This year’s protests turned into violent clashes with the security forces as a reaction to the police crackdown.

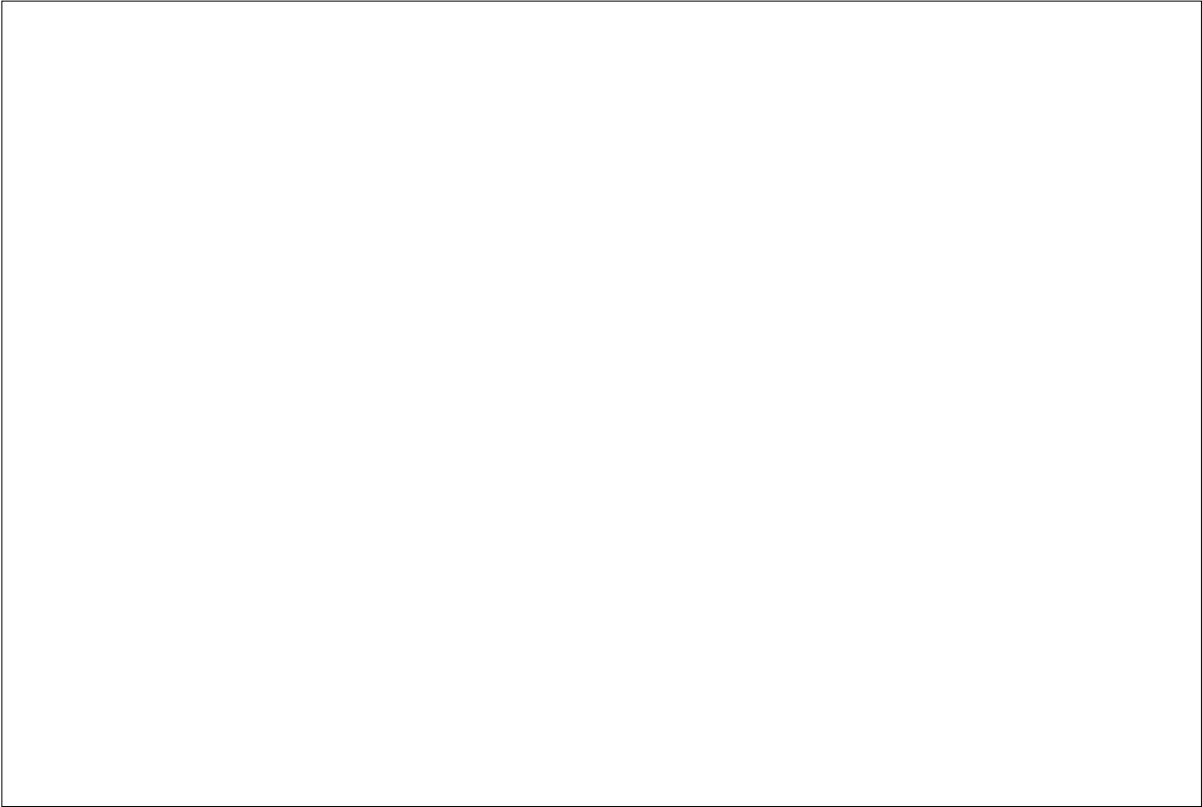
On Monday 8 January, the Interior Ministry acknowledged that a 55 year old man was killed during a protest in the town of Tebourba.

Police

Some protesters said the man had been run down by a police vehicle while the authorities claimed he had been overcome by tear gas.

In a number of areas, the army has been called out to back up local security forces. More than 800 protesters have been arrested.

Over the last three years popular protests by people who feel excluded from the “democratic transition” praised by the ruling class have increased.



PROTESTERS IN the capital Tunis last week

BACK STORY

Thousands of people in Tunisia have joined angry demonstrations

- Protesters are furious at austerity measures, corruption and political exclusion
- The government has raised prices of fuel and other goods, while unemployment grows
- There is a general mistrust of political parties in Tunisia, but the left helped to spark the protests
- The demonstrations show that the issues that led to revolution seven years ago haven’t gone away

The austerity measures are a result of conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the European Union in return for loans.

These loans have gone largely to paying off the country’s debts to the international banks.

There is a general mistrust of all political parties, especially by the impoverished and unemployed youth.

Yet the left played an important role in sparking the demonstrations.

Left activists have agitated against government policies and given confidence to the anger to erupt in the street.

The leadership of the Popular

front, the main left political alliance, issued a statement supporting the protests, while deploring “acts of violence and vandalism”.

The continuing protests demonstrate that none of the grievances that drove Tunisians into revolutionary struggle seven years ago have been resolved.

The revolution is a long process and the working class in Tunisia needs a leadership that is able to organise the struggle.

**What’s your story?**

Email with your ideas
reports@socialistworker.co.uk

A revolt against the rich

MAJOR PROTEST movements have broken out in Iran, Sudan and Tunisia this year.

Each has its own context and specific demands.

But what’s noticeable is their similarities and their roots in a revolt against austerity, the obscene gap between rich and poor, and political marginalisation.

The basic issues involved would be familiar to workers in Paris, Rome and Chicago—or London and Glasgow.

Each movement faces formidable obstacles. These include state

repression and failures of social democratic forces.

But it’s healthy to see such similar revolts in different capitalist societies. Billions would agree with the young Tunisian protester who said this week,

“The cost of living is too high. It’s a catastrophe. There are two types of people—the rich and the poor.”

Racist, fascist and far right forces have made the running in far too many places recently.

But this year can be one where workers unite against the wealthy elites.

Protesting in Sudan

IN BRIEF

Sudanese say no to austerity

ANTI-AUSTERITY protests have taken place across Sudan, north Africa.

As celebrations took place to mark 62 years of independence, the 2018 budget slashed subsidies.

This more than doubled the price of flour and therefore the cost of bread.

It also tripled the value of the US dollar against the Sudanese currency and raised the price of fuel.

The military, cops and the office of the presidency grabbed more than six times the funding that education, health and social security got.

President Omar Al-Bashir’s government responded with attacks on protesters that killed at least three people.

But the protests have been taken up by students at Khartoum University and Ahfad University.

Mahienour and Moatasem free

LAWYER AND revolutionary socialist Mahienour el-Massry and trade unionist Moatasem Medhat have been acquitted on appeal by a court in Alexandria, Egypt.

The two had been convicted of breaking Egypt’s repressive anti-protest law, and breaching a law on public assembly imposed by the British colonial authorities in 1914. They were sentenced to two years in jail.

The case against Mahienour and Moatasem sparked an international protest campaign. Solidarity actions took place in London, Leeds, Paris, Dublin and other cities.

Thousands of other activists remain in jail.

For details of solidarity campaigns go to egyptsolidarityinitiative.org

Breakfast in red



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For news and analysis on the stories that matter go to:
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IN THIS WEEK

1981

New Cross fire kills 13 people

A FIRE at a house in New Cross, south London, on 18 January 1981 killed 13 young black people.

Many people felt the fire was deliberately started by racists.

The cops’ failure to properly investigate the fire led to protests.



Carillion's collapse is a threat to thousands

As the outsourcing firm hits the rocks workers must not be made to pay the price, argues **Simon Basketter**

CARILLION WAS Britain's second-largest construction company, employing 43,000 people globally.

Now the profit-mongering edifice of privatisation and outsourcing has collapsed.

It's one of the largest suppliers of services to the public sector and has control of some of the biggest government contracts in Britain. Almost 30,000 people are likely to suffer cuts to their pensions after its collapse.

The government has promised to pay the wages of workers in 450 public sector contracts and urged them to keep turning up for work.

But over 11,000 private sector jobs were guaranteed for only 48 hours. Carillion had 20,000 employees in Britain and 62 percent of its work was in the private sector.

The company oversaw hospitals, schools and prisons, and had part of the contract to build HS2. It collapsed when last-ditch talks with its lenders and the government failed.

Problems

It took billions in public money. But there were problems with building the £350 million Midland Metropolitan Hospital in Smethwick and other projects.

Carillion has been one of the go-to firms for outsourcing and privatisation, first with New Labour and now with the Tories. The Carillion group already receives more than £1 billion of public money in government contracts each year.

Because of the size of its contracts some had assumed that its lenders would take control, refloat the company or take it off the stock market by swapping their debt for new shares in the company.

But the bankers sat on their hands—there was no point bailing out a company with their own money when the government would use public money.

The government continued to

WHAT'S A PFI?

Under PFI schemes, private firms grab contracts to build new facilities, such as schools

● They then lease them back to public bodies, such as the NHS, on 25 to 30 year contracts

● This locks public services into paying huge amounts of interest to private companies

● PFI schemes have meant a huge transfer of public money into private hands

● Banks can charge private contractors higher interest rates than they can the NHS

award work to Carillion after it had already admitted that it was in financial trouble and its shares had collapsed by 90 percent.

Just a week after a profit warning in July, the government named Carillion as one of the winners of £6.6 billion worth of contracts to deliver part of the new HS2 rail line.

Transport secretary Chris Grayling defended the decision, saying the government had received "secure undertakings" that the contracts would be delivered.

In November, following yet another profit warning, the beleaguered firm bagged two contracts with Network Rail worth £320 million.

A taxpayer loan likely to be worth hundreds of millions of pounds will be handed to Carillion's official receiver to keep public sector operations afloat, with a precise figure announced next month.

Carillion's collapse could trigger a "domino effect" across privatised and outsourced contractors.

In the Gulf Carillion employs 19,000 people. In Canada Carillion employs about 4,000 workers.

All of their jobs are also at risk.

On other pages...



Protest at university over racist conference>>Page 7

THOUSANDS OF workers' jobs—and pensions—are under threat

Bosses who snatched public money

■ **PHILIP GREEN**, chair of Carillion, is a £215,000-a-year self-styled Christian capitalist.

He likes to trumpet his noble deeds. "The more money you've got the more you should give away," he said.

He kept enough to buy a four-bedroom house outside Cape Town and owns a £2.2 million home in Berkshire.

Green led the company's business integrity committee.

He was appointed by David Cameron, when he was prime minister in 2011, as an adviser on corporate responsibility.

He was found in 1994 to be "in breach of trust" by the Pensions Ombudsman.

Green was a senior executive at Coloroll, a home furnishings group that went under in 1990.

The flat improperly bought by the Coloroll pension fund belonged to Green's colleague John Ashcroft.

■ **RICHARD HOWSON**, former chief executive, lives in a £2 million historic hall in north

Richard Howson

Yorkshire with his wife Geri and their two sons.

The couple also have a six-bedroom ski chalet in Rhone-Alpes, France.

He stepped down last autumn and received £1.5 million in salary, bonuses and pension last year.

Carillion agreed to keep paying him a salary of £660,000 and £28,000 in other benefits until October this year.

■ **RICHARD ADAM**, finance director, lives in a sprawling £3.5 million six-bedroom house on a private road in Hertfordshire.

Adam has had up to

£2.6 million in extra cash and shares since starting in 2006.

In 2016 he was handed a bonus of £140,000 and long term incentive awards worth £278,000.

■ **ZAFAR KHAN**, former group finance director, left in September after just nine months.

He is due to receive his £425,000 base salary until September this year.

■ **KEITH COCHRANE**, interim chief executive, is due to be paid his £750,000 salary until July.

■ **LABOUR BARONESS MORGAN OF HUXTON**, a senior independent non-executive, was appointed to Carillion's board in July 2017.

She was director of government relations at No 10 from 2001 to 2005 and is a former minister for women and equalities.

She is also a former chair of Ofsted.

Philip Green

Blacklisters Carillion ignored trade union safety concerns

CARILLION admitted in the High Court that it blacklisted workers who complained about safety on its building sites.

Meanwhile it was grabbing millions in public sector cash.

Workers on projects run by Carillion need to be paid and are entitled to their pensions.

But no more public money should be given to the bosses

of the disgraced company.

Roy Bentham, blacklisted carpenter from Liverpool and Blacklist Support Group (BSG) joint secretary commented, "Carillion going bust to me is karma."

"They were up to their neck in blacklisting union members for raising safety concerns. They got caught and said sorry but they were

only sorry for being caught."

Dave Smith, BSG joint secretary said, "Carillion blacklisted me after I raised concerns about safety on their building sites."

"At the very same time the company were milking public sector contracts including in the NHS."

"Not another penny of taxpayers' money should be given to these wretches."

Nottingham Hospital PFI deal was a dangerous scam

HEALTH campaigners kicked outsourcer Carillion out of Nottingham Hospital just in time.

Hospital bosses and Carillion agreed to terminate the cleaning contract and brought it back in house from 1 April last year.

The firm still runs parking enforcement at the trust.

Carillion took over Nottingham University Hospitals' £200 million Estates and Facilities contract in 2014.

Throughout its tenure the multinational ran a failing service.

Broken lifts in the hospital were left unfixed.

Patients and workers complained



Protesting against Carillion privatisation

about the standards of cleanliness at both Queen's Medical Centre and City Hospital. And in September 2016 a rat was spotted in one of the ward kitchens.

Mike Scott is part of the Notts Keep Our NHS Public (KONP) group that campaigned against Carillion at the hospital. "The KONP

campaign to ditch Carillion succeeded just in time to prevent the total collapse of support services," he said.

"Now other parts of the public sector are in the same state."

"Carillion should be allowed to collapse—and all public sector contracts be taken back in-house."

Pension misery on the cards

ALMOST 30,000 Carillion employees are likely to suffer cuts to their pensions after the collapse of the construction company.

People already receiving pensions will see at best no more rises in line with inflation.

Thousands more will see their pensions cut by at least 10 percent and probably as much as a fifth.

The firm's 13 pension schemes have 27,500 members, of whom about 13,000 are already collecting a pension.

The scheme will end up with the Pension Protection Fund (PPF).

Carillion has reported a pension deficit of almost £600 million but some pension experts say this could rise to £1.4 billion. This is because of the way pension deficits for collapsed companies are calculated.

That would leave the PPF on the hook for around £800 million.

The 2016 Carillion annual report says dividends have "increased in each of 16 years

since formation." Negotiations to enter the PPF could take years.

And the pensions come after the bankers who are in the queue to get paid. Across Britain only one in three defined-benefit private sector pension schemes are in a position to pay all members in full when the time comes.

At the current rate of failures in about 20 years, one-third of schemes would be inside the PPF.

And hundreds of thousands of workers will have their pensions reduced.

Socialist Worker WHAT WE THINK

BOSSSES CAN'T DELIVER THE CHANGE WE NEED

POLITICIANS and bosses rushed to denounce failed firm Carillion as the latest in a long list of companies described as the "unacceptable face of capitalism".

But Carillion was not some extraordinary deviation from the norm. It is the reality of capitalism, a system based on maximising profits.

Capitalism is driven forward by competition between firms—and bosses can't escape this.

If a capitalist firm doesn't try to grab as much profit as possible, it will be driven out of business by its competitors.

The Daily Telegraph newspaper was much more candid about capitalism this week.

"Firms going bust is not capitalism failing, it is capitalism working," it said.

"It is, of course, distressing for those personally affected," the article noted, but "it is capitalism at work".

Under capitalism, everything is subject to the logic that stems from creating profit—our jobs, our pay, and even the environment. Just this week the Norwegian government won

a court case against a group of environmentalists who tried to stop it drilling for oil in the arctic. Profits come ahead of the future of the planet.

Support for Jeremy Corbyn has shown that millions of people want an alternative to these horrors—and many now describe themselves as socialist.

The right have never been able to accept Corbyn's leadership.

They cried foul when left wing Labour members won the three positions on the party's national executive committee (NEC) this week. While they complained, the left celebrated.

Momentum founder and victorious NEC candidate Jon

“**Millions want an alternative to these horrors, and identify as socialist**”

G8 countries that Trump hasn't visited—despite being formally invited by Theresa May.

Ordinary people are often told that they are less important and less powerful than the people at the top.

But Trump's decision shows the power that people have when they organise collectively.

Trump was furious at the mass protests that greeted his inauguration in the US last January. He was humiliated. That's why he told May last year that he

Lansman hailed, "At last the 21st century version of the socialist party I joined 44 years ago."

But victories inside Labour can't win socialism because Labour itself can't get rid of capitalism.

Lansman thinks that a Corbyn-led government will deliver the "promised land" from the Labour left's wilderness years.

Labour has promised to win important reforms in our society—and these reforms can be won. But ultimately it's not possible to reform capitalism to work for us.

Working within capitalism means accepting its logic and its rules. That's why shadow chancellor John McDonnell now talks about "fiscal rules" and "balanced budgets". It's why he says he wants to convince businesses that Labour's planned reforms can work for them.

And that's also why winning real, lasting gains for working class people needs a socialist society based on meeting social need, not maximising profit.

That means breaking with capitalism—and building a working class movement outside of parliament that can do it.

PROTESTING WORKS

DONALD TRUMP won't visit Britain next month because he is too scared of protesters. The decision is a victory for everyone who had pledged to demonstrate if the visit went ahead. The hated US president was going to open the new US embassy in south London.

He chickened out after two million people said they would definitely protest against him, and more said they'd consider protesting.

Britain is one of only three

wouldn't visit Britain if there were to be large scale protests.

Demonstrations this weekend will mark the anniversary of Trump's inauguration. There should also be protests when Trump's secretary of state Rex Tillerson opens the US embassy next month. Protest works and we should keep doing it.

Join the Stand Up To Racism protest—No to Trump's racism Saturday 20 January, 2pm, US Embassy, Grosvenor Square, Join the Women's March protest—Sunday 21 January, 11am, Downing Street

STAND UP TO RACISM

NATIONAL DEMOS

- No to racism, Islamophobia, and antisemitism
- EU nationals are here to stay

SATURDAY 17 MARCH
London, Glasgow & Cardiff

Trade union conference

- Join the debate about how to mobilise for 17 March and give confidence to anti-racists in every workplace

SATURDAY 10 FEBRUARY
Hamilton House, London WC1H 9BD

To register go to standuptoracism.org.uk

ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



Labour should not back single market

JEREMY CORBYN is under increasing pressure from the Labour right to shift his policy on Brexit. This would mean—at the maximum—supporting a second referendum and—at the minimum—backing Britain staying in the European single market if it does leave.

One reason why this is happening is that the first stage of the negotiations with the EU, which ended in December, showed that most of the cards are in Brussels's hands. It is 27 states to one, with Britain needing access to European markets after it leaves. One ex-European commissioner, Pascal Lamy, has called Brexit not a negotiation but “an adjustment”.

So Theresa May ended up caving in to all the demands of the 27 EU countries. Now the talks will move on. May is seeking a so-called “bespoke” relationship with the EU that will allow banks and multinationals based in Britain the same access to the single market as they have now. EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier is saying that this isn't going to happen, and there's every reason to believe him.

So Remainers are becoming increasingly desperate either to reverse the Brexit vote or to ensure that Britain stays in the European customs union and the single market. This would mean having to accept EU regulations without having any say in their making, which is the plight of Norway and Switzerland.

The efforts to shift Labour towards this position are aided by the fact that party members seem to agree with it. A recent poll by the Mile End Institute found that 78 percent of Labour members support a second referendum and 87 percent want to stay in the single market.

Guardian columnist Polly Toynbee was on the Today programme last Saturday demanding that Corbyn “listen to his members”. But she didn't say that in the early 1980s, when Labour Party members supported unilateral nuclear disarmament and pulling out of the precursor to the EU. Instead she helped engineer a right wing breakaway.

The even more tarnished figure of Tony Blair has been campaigning for Labour to oppose Brexit. He's too discredited to have much influence, but members of the shadow cabinet are pushing in the same direction. For example, shadow foreign secretary Emily Thornberry said, “We have to leave the European Union but we don't need to go a long way.”

Concentrated

Corbyn himself has taken a carefully balanced position. A long standing critic of the EU, like his hero Tony Benn, he was forced by his shadow cabinet after he first became leader to campaign for a Remain vote. But, after the referendum, he moved quickly to accept the result and has concentrated on campaigning for a “jobs-first Brexit”.

To the fury of Remain supporters this position, combined with Labour's programme of economic reforms, has proved remarkably successful. It allowed Corbyn in last June's general election to win the backing of pro-EU young people opposed to austerity while not losing the votes of traditional Labour supporters who had voted to leave. “Labour's Brexit hokey-cokey wins votes, so far,” the strongly anti-Brexit Financial Times newspaper grudgingly admitted last week.

Corbyn is right for principled reasons too. Re-running the referendum won't change the fact that England in particular is split down the middle about the EU.

If the balance tilted the other way in a second vote, this would leave a huge chunk of voters—overwhelmingly at the poorer end of society—feeling bitter and cheated. They might be easy meat for the next right wing bandwagon that came along.

And Corbyn is also right to want to leave the single market. Its introduction in 1985-6 was the work of Margaret Thatcher and Jacques Delors, respectively the architects of neoliberalism in Britain and France.

The single market is not simply an economic space—it's a constantly expanding mass of regulations whose effect has been to drive neoliberalism deep into the political economy of Europe.

EU apologists point to the relatively generous welfare states that survive especially in northern Europe—but they continue precariously despite, and not because of, the single market. So Corbyn should stick to his guns.

CORBYN HAS effectively sacked one of his most steadfast supporters

Corbyn caves in to pressure as ally Chris Williamson goes

by NICK CLARK

THE LABOUR Party's left wing leadership has shown serious signs of accommodating to the right and big business in a bid to appear respectable.

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn effectively sacked left wing MP Chris Williamson—one of his strongest supporters—from his post as shadow fire minister last Thursday.

Clive Lewis—who resigned as shadow business secretary to rebel against Corbyn last year—was promoted back to the shadow cabinet the following day.

Williamson resigned after saying that councils should be able to double council tax on the most valuable homes—something that is not Labour Party policy. He was reported to have quit rather than agree to back down.

Progressive

In an article for the LabourList website, Williamson claimed, “My idea for a progressive council tax referendum wasn't the cause of my departure”. But he did say it was “one idea I wanted to champion from the backbenches”.

“I decided to stand down to give me that freedom to feed the fire which keeps the establishment on their toes,” he wrote—indicating that being in the shadow cabinet had held him back.

Many commentators and MPs from Labour's “moderate” right wing welcomed the sacking as a sign that Corbyn's Labour is preparing for government.

Stephen Bush of the New Statesman magazine wrote that Labour has “the air of a government-in-waiting.”

“That means that shadow ministers can no longer go ‘off piste’ without making news or being dismissed as cranks.”

Clive Lewis is back

Movement is the key

THE SENSE of a mass movement around Corbyn has been key to his success as Labour Party leader.

Corbyn's Labour still pays lip service to campaigning outside parliament.

For instance last week the Labour Party sent an “urgent” email to its supporters on the crisis in the NHS. It said, “Our people powered party will spring into action whenever it needs us”. Yet its only call for action was for people to add their names to a statement.

It made no mention of the demonstration in defence of the NHS

on 3 February—even though it's backed by the two biggest Labour-supporting unions Unite and Unison.

Labour also launched a “campaigns unit” earlier this month. Yet its focus appears to be solely electoral work for Labour. A mass movement of protests, strikes and occupations is the only thing that could fend off a bosses' onslaught on a left wing government. Building that movement means building that resistance now.

Right wing Labour MPs are anxious not to scare off support from the voters that they claim are opposed to left wing policies.

But more importantly big company bosses, bankers and shares fund managers are seriously worried about what a left wing Labour government could mean for them. Many are threatening economic sabotage.

Pressure

Appeasing them means that the pressure to appear responsible is especially sharp over economic policies.

That's why Williamson can make “controversial” statements such as support for the government in Venezuela or defending Palestine solidarity activists and get away with it.

But demands for higher taxes on the rich get him sacked.

It's also why left wing shadow chancellor John McDonnell is preparing to visit the World Economic Conference in Switzerland this month to “explain Labour's vision” to the world's most powerful bosses.

Corbyn and McDonnell hope they can convince bosses to allow a Labour government to end austerity and renationalise industries.

But the concessions they make now will only leave a Labour government weaker in the face of the coming onslaught.

Protest at university over racist conference

Campaigners on campuses and in communities are organising against racism, says Tomáš Tengely-Evans

CHANTS OF, “Decolonise UCL” and, “End eugenics now” rang out in front of University College London (UCL) on Monday.

Over 100 students, mainly Muslim and black, joined an angry protest after revelations that a UCL professor had hosted a racist conference on eugenics last year.

James Thompson, an honorary senior lecturer, hosted the London Conference on Intelligence.

It was attended by people with links to Nazism including Richard Lynn, who had previously called for the “phasing out” of the “populations of incompetent cultures”.

The university said that it was not aware the conference was taking place and that it would have gone against the government’s Prevent strategy.

Prevent is officially about monitoring all forms of “extremism”, but mainly targets Muslims. Ayo Olatunji, the BME officer at UCL, said, “If it was anything to do with ‘Islamism’, we would have counter terrorism police on campus.”

Odious

The odious Toby Young, who was appointed by Tory Jo Johnson to the Office for Students (OfS), was a prominent attendee at the conference. He was forced to resign from the OfS after a backlash against his bigotry.

Mataio, a UCL student, told Socialist Worker, “It really shows that racist ideas are at the heart of the Tory party.”

“They are committed to the politics of divide and rule.”

The scandal hammers home the need to build a movement against the racism pushed by the Tories and right wing press.

That’s why Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) and Muslim Engagement and Development (Mend) are hosting a national student conference in London on 3 March.

It’s an opportunity to draw together the different fights against racism on campus. Sessions include Fighting Islamophobia and

BACK STORY

Toby Young was forced to resign from the newly-created Office for Students last week

- Young was appointed to the body earlier this month
- His appointment sparked immediate outrage, as people pointed to his history of sexism
- He resigned shortly before being exposed as an attendee at a racist conference on eugenics

Antisemitism, and Decolonising Our Curriculum. SUTR groups across Britain are also building for rallies in the run-up to national demonstrations against racism in London, Glasgow and Cardiff on 17 March.

In Haringey SUTR supporters joined a welcome party at Wightman Road mosque for 40 Syrian refugee families who’ve moved to the north London borough.

And in Rotherham, South Yorkshire, SUTR hosted a community meal to raise awareness and funds for the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar. They also collected for the Calais convoy on 11 February, the day after SUTR trade union conference in London.

Meanwhile in Newham, east London, the calls by schools inspector Ofsted to question girls wearing the hijab in primary schools has led to action by head teachers and governors.

The head of governors at St Stephen’s School has called on the government to ban the hijab nationally for young children.

The school admits there has been a “backlash” against its policy on this and other issues.

The key issues are choice about what children wear, and no encouragement of Islamophobia. The Tories must not legislate in this area further.

Come to the Scottish Stand Up To Racism conference, 3 February in Glasgow. For details see the Facebook event page at bit.ly/2mZfrgl



PEOPLE CAME from across London for the monthly silent march on Sunday

PICTURES: GUY SMALLMAN

Grenfell residents look to council as report reveals fresh safety failings

by ALISTAIR FARROW

SEVEN MONTHS after the Grenfell Tower fire, the level of contempt for working class people felt by those responsible is still being revealed.

A report submitted to the Kensington and Chelsea council housing and planning scrutiny committee on Monday showed further failings by the body responsible for managing the tower.

The body, Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (KCTMO), has a backlog of 3,500 repairs.

It has also only now begun to carry out fire safety checks on the other properties it manages for the council.

The report also shows that Repairs Direct—the firm that KCTMO used to carry out maintenance work—has had over 700 complaints directed against it since 2014/15.

Residents and campaigners have held monthly silent marches to commemorate the victims of the fire. They have been an important focus of anger—and now they are

turning their focus towards the council. Walk organiser Zeyad Cred said, “It’s time for us to take this movement to the other side of Kensington.”

“I’m suggesting we meet at the town hall in Kensington and march to the tower.”

Some 2,000 people joined the silent march on Sunday night. People came from across London to pay their respects and to voice their anger.

Social housing tenants everywhere face the same kind of contempt as the people who lived in Grenfell Tower.

Hanan from the Ledbury Tenants Action Group in Southwark spoke to Socialist Worker about their fight to get repair work done.

“We had holes in the walls between flats, which means fire will spread easily between them,” he said.

“But wider problems with the construction



On the silent march

have been revealed. People are being made to bid against each other for new council homes. It’s outrageous.”

General secretary of the Fire Brigades Union Matt Wrack told Socialist Worker, “We can’t allow the issue to be kicked into the long grass. There needs to be a powerful alliance of the local community and trade unions to take the fight forward.”

A meeting has been called by the Justice4Grenfell campaign on 1 February at the Maxilla Social Club in the shadow of the tower.

And campaigners and local people have called for a national demonstration on the anniversary of the fire.

Simohamed told Socialist Worker he has been to every single silent walk so far. “The government doesn’t really want to deal with it so they just want to delay and avoid responsibility,” he said.

His friend Jonah agreed. He said, “They see it as a problem for them so they want to push it out of the spotlight.”

Grenfell—how can we get justice? Thursday 1 February, 7pm. Maxilla Social Club, 2 Maxilla Walk, London, W10 6NQ

70,000 out in Vienna against the fascist FPÖ

Mass protests can put the fascists and Tory coalition in Austria on the back foot, argues **Tomáš Tengely-Evans**

AROUND 70,000 anti-fascists protested in Vienna against the Austrian Tory/Nazi coalition government last Saturday.

The demonstration was a mass show of defiance less than a month after the Tory OVP and fascist FPÖ coalition was inaugurated. About 10,000 protested then.

Protesters came from across Austria to show their opposition.

Johanna, who had come from Linz in the north with a group of refugees, said, "It was impressive, it was mixed and diverse."

A bloc of Afghan and Syrian refugees led the demonstration, and the biggest cheers at the rally went to a Muslim woman speaker.

David Albrich, a member of Austrian revolutionary socialist group Left Turn Now, was one of the organisers of the demonstration. "A big step forward was getting the trade unions and anti-racists together" he told Socialist Worker.

"There were contingents of trade unions from the private sector, lots of students and a bloc of Muslims."

Racism

The "black-blue" coalition is pushing through free market reforms and racism against refugees and Muslims.

The FPÖ's rise was spurred by the OVP running one of Austria's most racist campaigns that normalised fascist policies.

Tensions in the coalition—and within the FPÖ—are coming to the fore. David explained, "They tried 'shock politics' like Donald Trump by announcing a lot of attacks against different groups."

"They hoped that it would frighten the movement, but there are conflicts within in the government and 70,000 people protesting."

The fascists have been putting out signals to their supporters.

FPÖ interior minister Herbert Kickl sparked outrage last week when he said that asylum seekers should be "concentrated" in one place.

One protester said, "If that's not

BACK STORY

The protest showed there is a mood to fight the fascists on the streets

● Protesters travelled from across Austria

● A previous demonstration attracted 10,000. Saturday's demonstration is a step forward

● The Tory OVP party has invited the FPÖ into government

● The FPÖ has been allowed to rise thanks to mainstream racism

Nazi rhetoric, then I do not know what is".

Planned unemployment benefit attacks have caused a backlash among the FPÖ's supporters.

David said, "The fascist social affairs minister had to go on TV to say that they're not going ahead with the reforms."

"Then the FPÖ leader had to come out and say it's still happening."

The FPÖ being in government doesn't mean that Austria has become fascist. It was in coalition with the Labour-type SPÖ in the 1980s with the OVP in the 2000s.

And being in government has meant that they have focused on their more "respectable" face. David said, "We thought that the FPÖ and other Nazi groups could go on the streets, but we're not facing that—yet."

This doesn't mean that the FPÖ will unravel because of tensions within it.

The FPÖ's aim remains to build a mass movement that can smash working class organisation and democratic rights. It is emboldened by entering government.

That's why anti-fascists are planning another mass protest on 26 January when the FPÖ hosts its annual ball.



On other pages...

Tens of thousands join strikes in Germany >>Page 17



A SECTION of the march in Vienna. The sign reads, 'Equal opportunities and education for all'

GREECE

Transport strike cancels flights and brings trains and buses to standstill

THOUSANDS OF transport workers in Greece struck on Monday of this week against the left wing Syriza government's plans to bring in harsh new anti-union laws.

Workers on the Athens metro, trams and buses, as well as airport baggage handlers joined the strike.

The strike forced airlines to cancel flights from Athens airport, and shut down the capital's transport system.

It followed a similar mass strike last Friday—the first major strike of 2018—this time also involving hospital workers in hospitals and shipyards. The strike caused huge disruption in Athens, causing major traffic jams.

Some 9,000 workers protested in Athens last Friday against Syriza's planned new law, chanting "Hands off strikes".

The new law would impose a 50 percent participation threshold in strike votes.

The Greek GSEE union said it was resisting the new threshold as it "effectively eliminates even constitutionally safeguarded rights such as the right to strike".

And Odysseus Trivalas, general secretary of the public sector Adedy union, said, "Effectively it will be impossible for workers in factories to have their voice heard."

"These were rights won with sweat and blood more than three decades ago. Banks, industrialists and foreign investors want to deny



Alexis Tsipras and European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker

us them. We won't make it easy. We will take to the streets."

The new law is part of a "multi-bill" of changes—that also include welfare cuts—that Syriza was set to force through the Greek parliament on Monday.

Implementing

The changes are part of the austerity measures and free market reforms that Syriza is implementing at the behest of Greece's creditors. They are the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund—together known as the "Troika".

Syriza was elected in January 2015 on a promise to end austerity and defy the Troika, but quickly capitulated to their demands.

Yet Syriza's austerity measures have provoked some resistance

from Greek workers, including a general strike against the attacks late last year.

And they have caused problems inside Syriza too. Greek prime minister Alexis Tsipras had to argue with Syriza MPs and activists to support the changes.

Workers Solidarity, Socialist Worker's sister newspaper in Greece, wrote that Syriza's drive to pass the bill was a "brutal anti-worker attack".

"It undermines the propaganda that says the Tsipras government is promoting an end to the memorandum," it said. "It paves the way for enforcing the memorandum for many years."

"In spite of this, these strikes are organised at the base. The success of Friday's strike can play a role in escalating workers' resistance."

Nick Clark

It's right to fight sexism

THE FRENCH actor Catherine Deneuve, along with around 100 other women, claimed recently that the #MeToo campaign against sexual harassment was excessive.

Their letter said the campaign had become an attack on "sexual freedom".

It even said the campaign had become a "witch hunt", and is meant to "intimidate people into speaking correctly".

It is quite sad that Deneuve has fallen prey to liberalism's empty promises.

Liberals assume that all individuals have "liberty" just because they are formally entitled to it. It is hard not to take their claims with a pinch of salt.

Statistics from charity Rape Crisis show that women are much more likely than men to get raped—12 men for every 85 women.

Misogyny and subordination of women is rooted in the fabric of society.

Without socialists and feminists challenging such implicit structures, marital rape wouldn't be seen as rape in our current society.

Sexual harassment should be addressed by looking at implicit forms of oppression—not just glaringly obvious ones. There is no good or bad rape victim.

Deneuve thinks that sexual urge is naturally wild and aggressive and that the campaign is stifling men's liberty to "seduce".

Let me make it clear, women do not owe anything to men and accosting us against our wishes is blatant harassment.

Prarthana Krishnan
Bristol



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

We can build a campaign to make life in Scarborough fair

AS A resident of Scarborough—Britain's low-pay capital—I was uplifted to learn of Jeremy Corbyn's plans to get Labour campaigning in "left behind" communities.

People here have had enough of trying to live on fresh air.

Scarborough is a town cut to the bone and made ugly by the "flog it cheap and knock it down" mentality of the Tory council.

The local Labour Party has already initiated two low-pay rallies outside the town hall to force the living wage for council workers onto council meeting agendas.

I was on both, and we've talked with Labour Party comrades about building among unions, low-pay workplaces and on the street.

With the racist Ukip posing as local "corruption busters" and the Nazi National Front campaigning on the high street, how we campaign matters.

Our movement needs to be more than an opportunity to explain Labour policies to potential voters.

We need to start from the needs of our class. We have to be uncompromising on racism and immigration and have no truck with the anti-establishment posing of the populist right.

We need to give people confidence to take action themselves. We need debate among the various political forces involved—and then build united campaigning.

As Corbyn put it at a Bfawu union meeting in Scarborough, "The rich have never handed us anything on a plate. Everything we've got we've had to fight for."

We need to fight together. The right try to batter Corbyn into fudging his principles and watering down his policies to become "respectable" enough for office. If we build fighting campaigns, we can pressure him from the left.

We don't want respectable. We want change.

It's not just pockets of geography that have been left behind—it's the working class. I'm looking forward to the fight.

Kim Hunter
Scarborough

No more delays to trans rights changes

LIKE MANY trans people, I was sceptical but pleased when Theresa May announced that the government would change the Gender Recognition Act. The changes would allow trans people to legally change their gender without medical checks.

But I was not surprised when all discussion for proposed changes was pushed back amid Tory concerns of "men in drag" attacking women in toilets.

The Republic of Ireland has had self-declaration since 2015. There have been no cases of attacks on women in toilets by trans women.

Trans people's existence is already plagued with long wait times for treatment and gatekeeping for legal recognition. Failure to make the necessary changes can only have negative effects on us.

Anna Pope
Manchester

High quality homes for us

THE ARCHITECT who built the council estate where I live in Camden died last week. Neave Brown built three major estates in London during the 1960s and 70s. Uniquely, all of his work in Britain has listed status.

A life-long socialist, he often complained about Thatcher's Right to Buy scheme and the effect it had on the estates he built.

And last year he raged about the Grenfell fire,



The Rowley Way estate in London—designed by Neave Brown

saying that housing now is all about profit.

Neave fought for high quality homes for working class people. "We have to ask if it is building a new generation of nuclear

missiles we can never use, or a good standard of new housing for the people of Britain," he said.

We need more like Neave.
Andrea Butcher
Central London

Just a thought...

Grayling plays blame game

A REPORT from the National Audit Office last week says Southern Thameslink and Great Northern rail companies are not providing value for money.

What a surprise that transport secretary Chris 'Failing' Grayling blamed trade unions.

It sums up the "not me gov" attitude of this rotten government.

David Hart
Essex

Is it really censorship?

I SEE right wingers accused Virgin Trains of censorship for not stocking the Daily Mail newspaper.

I'm sure they'll be leading the charge to get Virgin to stock Socialist Worker.

Daniel Hadfield
On Twitter

Sivanandan is a great loss

SAD TO hear that A Sivanandan of the Race Relations Institute passed away this month.

Sivanandan was an activist intellectual. His death is a great loss.

Michael Lavalette
Liverpool

Free meals for all children

SHOCKING THAT means testing will mean some children will lose their free school meals (Socialist Worker online, 11 January).

Every school child should be given a free lunch.

Ms Galahad
On Twitter

●YES—IT is hitting the most vulnerable in society and could damage children's health. And what message does it send out to the kids?

Maurice Hugh Walker
On Twitter

Hands off soft Labour left

YOUR ARTICLE "Beware the soft left" (Socialist Worker, 3 January) warns us about the people who actually deliver Labour victories.

Get your hands off our party, scumbags.
Councillor Jon Burke
Hackney, east London

COWARDLY, SEXIST, racist US president Donald Trump has lurched from crisis to crisis since his inauguration a year ago this Saturday. His attacks have been relentless—but the resistance has been inspiring.

Trump confirmed last week that he won't be opening the new US embassy in London next month. He was scared of mass protests.

Trump's White House has pushed racism, sexism, homophobia and transphobia. It's promised to start oil drilling under melting polar ice caps. And, in a chilling speech to the

United Nations, Trump said the US would "totally destroy North Korea" with nuclear weapons.

During his presidential election campaign Trump slammed Wall Street as "getting away with murder."

That was all insincere bluster. Despite the US ruling class's worries about Trump's chaotic methods of rule, he has delivered for the rich. His tax cut bill last month was a trillion dollar handout to corporations and rich individuals.

It slashed corporation tax from 35 to 20 percent and piled higher taxes onto poor people. And it repealed parts of the Affordable Care

Act—"Obamacare"—which provided limited health care for the poorest.

But Trump's racism is sincere, and he has introduced terrifying new powers for immigration officials and border guards. Just last week Trump said the US should not accept migrants from "shithole" countries in Africa and others such as Haiti.

Crime

During the presidential election campaign, Trump said Mexicans were "bringing drugs". "They bring crime. They're rapists," he said.

And now he has asked for over £13 billion from congress to begin

building a wall along the US-Mexico border. However, Trump's advisers remain shaky on the basic foundations of the proposal.

"There are rivers involved, I'm told," said media spokesperson Kellyanne Conway. "There are mountains involved, there's terrain that isn't conducive to building an actual physical structure in some places."

Trump has also faced resistance to his sexism. After a recording emerged of Trump bragging about grabbing women "by the pussy", millions joined Women's Marches in the US and across the world.

And the #MeToo movement has

challenged abusers and harassers in positions of power and given the confidence to millions of women to come forward.

The tensions within the Trump administration came to the fore after the murder of anti-fascist Heather Hayer in Charlottesville last August. Trump said there were "bad guys" on "many sides," equating anti-fascists with the fascists.

He also said the Nazi demo included "some very fine people".

A wave of anti-racist vigils and protests followed. Trump's business advisory committee opportunistically resigned, and Trump was forced to

sack white supremacist adviser Steve Bannon. Bannon's Breitbart News website had defended Nazi Richard Spencer against "claims of racism".

Violent

Nazis remain a minor force, but they have been emboldened by having a racist in the White House

Many see Trump as the "legitimate" wing of the "suited and booted" fascist strategy.

The direction the resistance to Trump moves in now is important.

The leadership of the Women's March movement is quite clear where it wants to go—to the ballot box and

in favour of the Democrats.

To mark the anniversary of Trump's inauguration the organisation released a statement which said, "It's time to turn our movement power into electoral power."

"We're gearing up not just for our one-year anniversary but for what comes after—a national voter registration and mobilisation tour to bring our power to the polls."

Although the organisation doesn't say "vote Democrat", there are few other conclusions that can be drawn.

Democratic and left wing candidates have won key local elections in the last year.

Philadelphia's new district attorney Larry Krasner, who had previously done pro bono work for Black Lives Matter, started work last Monday by firing 31 right wing lawyers.

Movement

It's a good start—but it will take more than mass sackings to really drain the swamp.

The Trump administration will hang on grimly to office.

And the capitalist state is more than the people that inhabit its offices. Its entire purpose is to block the kind of wide-ranging change that some people hope the likes of Krasner

can deliver. The Democratic Party is a dead end. Maintaining an independent movement outside of it is crucial.

What has been largely missing from the resistance is the organised working class. But where there have been exceptions, they have been very important.

Teachers and school transport workers in Prince George's County, Maryland, effectively staged a strike to support the Women's Strike in March. And the New York taxi drivers and others who struck against the Muslim Ban were another important example.

Where there have been protests and strikes, politicians and judges

have followed in their wake to claim credit and file legal challenges against Trump's policies.

If the movement gets sucked into focusing on elections it will be its death knell.

Presidents have been forced out of office before—such as Richard Nixon in 1973. But it took an almighty movement against the Vietnam War for that to happen.

That is why the movement must stay on the streets, grow and go deeper into the working class.

It's not just heartening to see people protesting against Trump, it's part of how real change is won.

JANUARY Trump's inauguration



...and the protests against him



The Women's March in Washington



MARCH Trump's travel ban, which targets Muslims, is enacted



APRIL The US bombs Syria



JUNE White House says the US will pull out of Paris climate change deal



... and public health care is attacked



TRUMP YEAR ONE OF THE 'STABLE GENIUS'



JULY Scaramucci sacked



AUGUST Trump calls Nazis marching in Charlottesville 'very fine people'



... and Steve Bannon is fired too



SEPTEMBER Hurricane Henry hits US. Trump responds, 'Have a good time'



NFL players who refuse to stand for the national anthem are 'sons of bitches'



DECEMBER Jerusalem is Israel's capital, says Trump



SOcialist Worker spoke to people on the protests against Trump in Washington DC last January. A year after Trump's inauguration, we asked them how they're keeping up the fight against him.

Carmen

IT HAS been a year of constant battle against Trump.

But I am not sure he will be forced out of office unless they find more serious issues such as obstruction of justice.

The accusations so far haven't had any valid evidence. "Russiagate" has been spun by the corporate media and is not going anywhere.

The election manipulation by Russia has sunk in the public eye. Voters hated Hillary Clinton and she lost.

The Democrats are trying to use Trump to win a majority in Congress. But hating Trump is

not enough to win voters who are despondent with the way the Democrats are going—benefiting their corporate donors and not the people.

They will succeed only if they become more progressive on urgent issues such as health care, global warming, fighting the oil industry and protecting social services.

Bonnie

SINCE THE Women's March, I've marched for immigrants' rights in Dallas and went back to Washington DC to attend a March for Civility.

I didn't think Trump would make the first 100 days, and now it's been a year.

Our best bet is if Robert Mueller's special investigation into Russian links confirms wrong-doing. I have absolutely no hope that the Republicans will do anything to force him from office since he is doing their bidding.



Carmen



Bonnie



Ken



Mike

Ken

I HAVE joined a group on the internet of likeminded people from Nebraska and around the world.

We communicate every day on what is happening with Trump.

Republicans are no more pleased with Trump than Democrats.

But Trump is fulfilling their agenda by deregulating anything he can deregulate, pushing a tax cut for the rich, pushing anti-immigration legislation and other items that are on the Republican agenda.

My concern is that this country is adjusting to a "new normal"—a chaos that more and more people are seeing as business as usual.

More and more people—including Independents and some conservative Democrats—agree with some of what Trump is doing and saying.

Mike

EUGENE DEBS, the socialist leader of the early 1900s, said that there was no difference between Democrats and Republicans.

Both parties belong to corporate greed—the Democrats say they are for the people but do little to help.

We cannot challenge the 1 percent, they are too strong for us.

The alternative is to build another economy based on cooperatives where people create their own jobs and deal with other cooperatives.

The 99 percent do not need the 1 percent—but the reverse is not true.



More online

Read our coverage of the Women's March anti-Trump protest bit.ly/2D4pcSL



SOcialist Worker also spoke to activists from migrant rights organisations about the battles they've faced since Trump's inauguration.

Roberto Valadez Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (Daca) activist

TRUMP IS attacking every group which is marginal, so we all have a common enemy. Dreamer (undocumented child) migrants are Asian, black and from every group. We may not have exactly the same struggles but we have a shared experience of oppression. We must come together and fight.

Trump rescinded the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (Daca) programme in

September. Since then we've seen a lot of attacks and a lot of people have lost their legal status—122 people every day nationally.

I'm part of an migrant-led organisation. We protest, phone bank and organise legislative visits. Last week we saw the decision of the court of appeal judge to overturn Trump's attack on Daca. It's allowed everyone a sigh of relief and we've seen that we're not alone—the judicial system is still in place.

And we've seen that when people mobilise, the president and congress have to respond to that.

We have a Republican representative in El Paso who was quiet on the issue, but after weeks of mobilisations he came out in support.

On a national level four Democratic senators said they would not vote on the immigration bill without a clause guaranteeing Daca rights. After campaigning the number increased from four to 34.

Alan Dicker

Texas Detained Migrants Solidarity Committee

SINCE TRUMP has come in border police have started detaining pregnant women.

It had been happening previously but in 2014/15 people were stopped and then released on parole. There have been miscarriages recently in ICE detention.

We've seen children separated from their parents.

We're also seeing more people being detained after signing documents. Security guards and deportation officers are pressuring people to sign papers.

A lot of people in detention agree to be removed to not be detained and to avoid criminal detention. But the police have been charging people with criminal entry. That means people are being detained in federal prisons.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7840 5602 for more information

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } PUBLIC MEETINGS

BRADFORD

Abortion Wars — The Fight for Reproductive Rights

Wed 31 Jan, 7pm,
Glyde House,
Little Horton Lane
(opposite the ice rink),
BD5 0BQ
Book launch with
author Judith Orr

BRIGHTON & HOVE

Marxism and religion

Thu 25 Jan, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Ship St,
BN1 1AF

YORK

Why we need a revolution to end racism

Wed 31 Jan, 7.30pm,
Priory Street
Community Centre,
15 Priory St,
YO1 6ET

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

BARNLEY

Marxism and alienation

Thu 25 Jan, 7pm,
YMCA,
Blucher St,
S70 1AP

BIRMINGHAM: CITY CENTRE

From Deliveroo to McStrike — how has the working class changed?

Wed 24 Jan, 7pm,
Birmingham LGBT Centre,
38/40 Holloway Circus,
B1 1EQ

BOLTON

The Warsaw Ghetto uprising

Wed 24 Jan, 7pm,
Bolton Socialist Club,
16 Wood St (off
Bradshawgate),
BL1 1DY

BRADFORD

Capitalism and technology — is a robot after your job?

Thu 25 Jan, 7pm,
Glyde House,
Little Horton Lane
(opposite the ice rink),
BD5 0BQ

CAMBRIDGE

Zimbabwe — from colonialism to the fall of Mugabe

Thu 25 Jan, 7.30pm,
River Lane Centre,
River Lane,
CB5 8HP

CARDIFF

Trotsky and the fight against fascism

Wed 24 Jan, 7.30pm,
Cathays Community Centre,
Cathays Terrace,
CF24 4HX

CHESTERFIELD

The crisis in social housing

Thu 25 Jan, 7.30pm,
Chesterfield Library,
New Beetwell St,
S40 1QN

COLCHESTER

The fight for LGBT+ liberation today

Thu 25 Jan, 7.30pm,
Oyster Room,
Hythe Community Centre,
CO1 2FG

COVENTRY

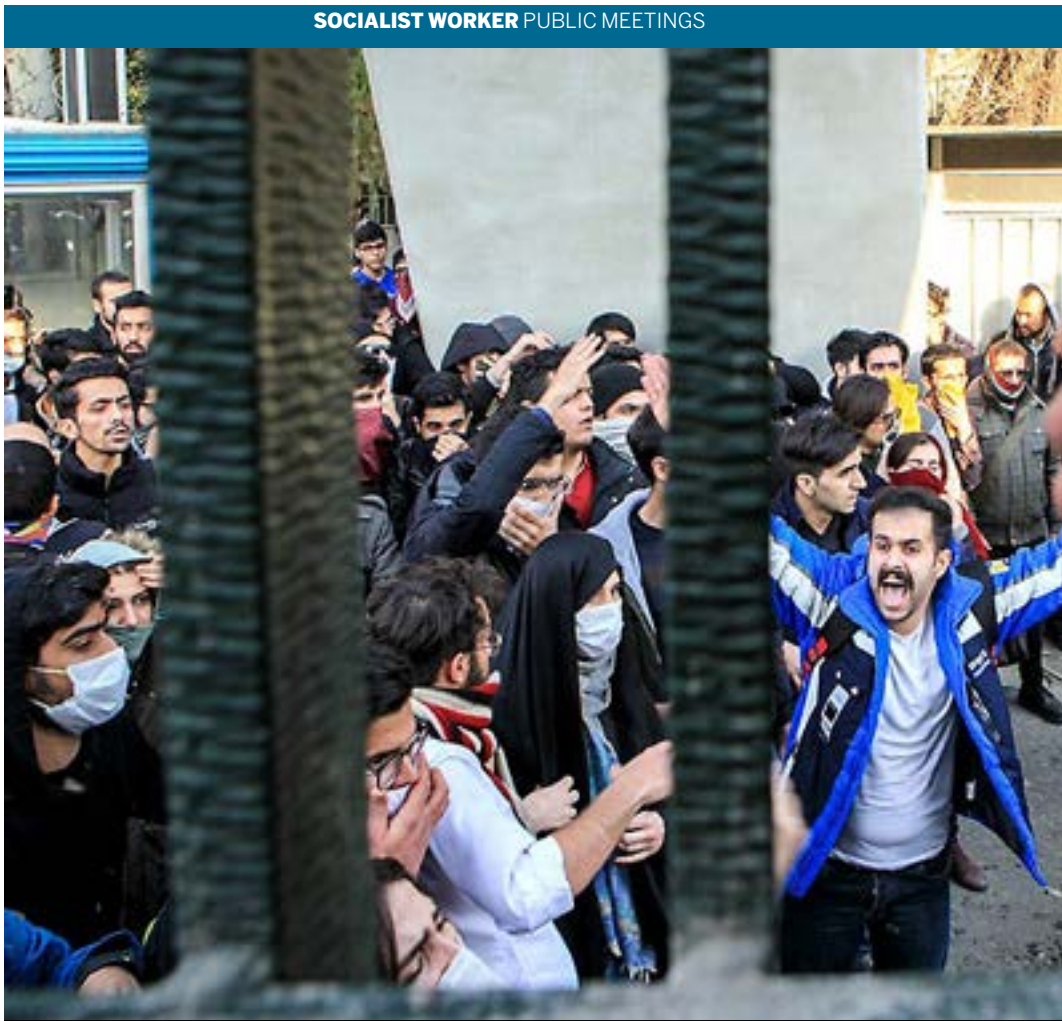
The bloody history of the British Empire

Wed 24 Jan, 7.30pm,
West Indian Centre,
159 Spon St,
CV1 3BB

HUDDERSFIELD

Alternative facts, Trump and power — media in the 21st century

Wed 24 Jan, 6.30pm,
Brian Jackson House,
2 New North Parade
(near both train and
bus stations),
HD1 5JP



Protesters at Tehran university

What's behind the protests in Iran?

ABERDEEN

Wed 24 Jan, 6pm,
Belmont Cinema Cafe,
49 Belmont St,
AB10 1JS

BRISTOL

Wed 24 Jan, 7.30pm,
YHA,
14 Narrow Quay,
BS1 4QA

LONDON: CENTRAL

Was Marx right?

Thu 25 Jan, 6.15pm,
Room 777, Institute of
Education (IOE),
20 Bedford Way, WC1H 0AL

LONDON: EALING

Is socialism possible?

Thu 25 Jan, 7.30pm,
Y Lounge, YMCA West London,
25 St Mary's Rd, W5 2RE

LONDON: HARINGEY

Poplar 1921 — when a Labour council beat the Tories

Wed 24 Jan, 7.30pm,
St John Vianney Church Hall,
386 West Green Rd (corner
Vincent Rd), N15 3QH

BURNLEY AND PENDLE

Wed 24 Jan, 7.30pm,
Red Triangle Cafe,
160 St James's St,
BB11 1NR

DONCASTER

Wed 24 Jan, 7.30pm,
The Womens Centre
(Changing Lives),
5 Princes Street,
DN1 3NJ

LONDON: NEWHAM

A rebel's guide to Paul Robeson

Wed 24 Jan, 7pm,
Stratford Advice Arcade,
107-109 The Grove (next
to Morrisons car park),
E15 1HP

LONDON: SOUTH

The NHS in crisis — how the pursuit of profit wrecks our healthcare

Wed 31 Jan, 7pm,
Vida Walsh Centre,
2b Saltoun Rd
(near Effra Rd, facing
Windrush Square),
SW2 1EP

EXETER

Sat 20 Jan, 2pm,
Exeter Community Centre,
17 St. Davids Hill, EX4 3RG

LONDON: BRENT AND HARROW

Thu 25 Jan, 7.30pm,
The Pepperpot Centre,
1a Thorpe Close,
Ladbroke Grove (very close
to the station), W10 5XL

LONDON: TOWER HAMLETS

Palestine, Trump and Jerusalem

Wed 24 Jan, 7pm,
Oxford House,
Derbyshire St (opposite
Bethnal Green Rd Tesco),
E2 6HG

LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST

Rent strikes, squatting and protests — how we can fight for the homes we need

Wed 24 Jan, 7.30pm,
William Morris
Community Centre,
6-8 Greenleaf Rd,
Walthamstow,
E17 6QQ

MANCHESTER: CENTRAL

Sexism and the system — the fight for women's liberation

Wed 24 Jan, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
6 Mount St,
M2 5NS

MEDWAY

The revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx

Thu 25 Jan, 7.30pm,
Nucleus Arts Centre
(Conference Room),
272 High St,
ME4 4BP

NORWICH

Palestine, Trump and resistance

Thu 1 Feb, 7.30pm,
Vauxhall Centre,
Johnson Place,
NR2 2SA

NEWCASTLE

Thu 25 Jan, 7pm,
The Labour Club,
11 Leazes Park Rd,
NE1 4PF

OXFORD

Is globalisation finished?

Wed 31 Jan, 7.30pm,
Restore,
Manzil Way (off Cowley Rd),
OX4 1YH

PORTSMOUTH

Going beyond the binary — Marxism, gender and trans politics

Wed 24 Jan, 7.30pm,
Somerstown
Community Centre,
River's St,
PO5 4EZ

ROTHERHAM

Sexism and the system — the fight for women's liberation

Wed 24 Jan, 7pm,
Talbot Lane Methodist
Church Centre,
Moorgate St,
S60 2EY

SHEFFIELD: CITY CENTRE

Sexism and the system — the fight for women's liberation

Thu 25 Jan, 7pm,
Central United
Reformed Church,
60 Norfolk St (near
Crucible Theatre),
S1 2JB

SWANSEA

Antisemitism, Islamophobia and the rise of the far right in Europe

Thu 25 Jan, 7.30pm,
Brynmill Community Centre,
St Albans Rd,
SA20BP

YORK

Social mobility and inequality in Britain today

Wed 24 Jan, 7.30pm,
Sea Horse Hotel,
4 Fawcett St,
YO10 4AH

{ MOVEMENT EVENTS }

DORSET SOCIALISTS

Palestine, Trump and Jerusalem

Sat 3 Feb, 1.30pm,
Colliton Club,
Colliton Park,
DT1 1XJ

LIVERPOOL

Holocaust Memorial Day — Why we say Never Again!

Thu 25 Jan, 7pm,
The Hornby Library,
Central Library,
William Brown St,
L3 8EW

(Organised by Unite Against
Fascism, co-hosted by
Stand Up To Racism)

{ STAND UP TO RACISM }

Holocaust Memorial Day — Why we say Never Again!

Co-hosted by Unite
Against Fascism

BRISTOL

Thu 25 Jan, 7.30pm,
Bristol City Hall,
College Green,
BS1 5TR

CAMBRIDGE

Mon 22 Jan, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
12 Jesus Ln,
CB5 8BA

EDINBURGH

Wed 24 Jan, 7pm,
University of Edinburgh,
Lecture Theatre 5,
Appleton Tower,
EH8 9YL

LEEDS

Thu 25 Jan, 6pm,
Mill Hill Chapel,
City Square,
LS1 5EB
Speaker: Merilyn Moos

LONDON: EAST

Tue 23 Jan, 7.30pm,
Halkevi Community Centre,
33 Dalston Lane,
E8 2PE

Speakers: Nahella Ashraf,
Isobel Kingscott, Jane
Loftus, David Rosenberg

LONDON: NORTH

Thu 25 Jan, 7pm,
Islington Town Hall,
Committee Room 1,
Upper St,
N1 2UD

Speaker: Fatima Hersi, Toufik
Kacimi, Naima Omar, David
Rosenberg, Claudia Webbe

LONDON: SOUTH

Wed 24 Jan, 6.45pm,
Brixton Library,
Windrush Square,
SW2 1EF

Speaker: Julia Bard,
Lubaba Khleid, Paula
Peters, Nadia Sayed

MANCHESTER

Thu 1 Feb, 7pm,
St Peter's House Chaplaincy,
Precinct Centre,
Oxford Road,
M13 9GH

PORTSMOUTH

Thu 25 Jan, 7.30pm,
The Hub
(University of Portsmouth),
Burnaby Road,
PO1 3FX

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Alex Callinicos on Zimbabwe after Mugabe

Martin Upchurch asks is globalisation finished?

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Three Billboards paints a dark picture of US society

A brutal and moving new film takes the narratives that are shaping US politics to tell a darkly comic and powerful story, says **Claire Chandler**

THIS FILM is a dry, dark satire which pulls questions about the nature of humanity, good and evil, redemption and salvation out of its cowboy hat.

It leaves you wondering quite what it was that you saw. And it messes with assumptions about who is in the right.

It is tragic, comic, and will leave you in tears. Full of bad language, violence and adult themes it does not pull punches, which is only to be expected from Martin McDonagh, the writer of *In Bruges*. It's also almost impossible to review without giving away spoilers.

Mildred Hayes (Frances McDonagh) is a mother whose daughter was raped and murdered.

One year on and the police have made no progress and have no leads.

In frustration she hires three billboards to publicly challenge the police and Chief Willoughby (Woody Harrelson) on lack of progress with the case.

Torturing

She wonders if the cops are too busy "torturing niggers."

The billboards cause uproar in the small community and Mildred is repeatedly asked to take them down but responds forthrightly and assertively.

Her response to the local priest is particularly amusing.

Cop Jason Dixon takes the attack personally. You start off hating his character but by the end don't know what to think.

There are multiple stories and multiple questions—each story weaves around the others and none of them stands alone.

The film isn't only about police



MILDRED HAYES (Frances McDonagh) is left to fight for justice on her own.

incompetence or indifference, nor is it solely about police racism but also homophobia.

At one point Willoughby says that if they got rid of all the racists then they'd probably be stuck with people who hate gays.

Class issues are front and centre here. In a small, poor, rural US town racism is not hidden—it's often advertised as a thing to be proud of.

The scenes using fire evoke the

KKK splendidly and send chills down your spine.

There is no place of safety for any in this town, posing questions about the role and nature of the police.

Power

The black police officer sent to take charge towards the end of the film tells Mildred that all police are not the enemy. She does not dignify him with a reply.

Do those in power protect their own? I leave it to you to decide on the few final scenes.

There are excellent performances from the cast, and the film picked up four Golden Globe awards including Best Picture, Best Screenplay, Best Actress and Best Supporting Actor.

It also has a gorgeous Americana soundtrack.

This film is a joy, but joy does not come without tears.

Kiri veers into cliché but is still a worthwhile watch

TELEVISION

KIRI

Wednesdays at 9pm on Channel 4 and online at 4OD

THE FIRST episode of *Kiri* aired on Channel 4 last week. The 4-part drama focuses on a fostered nine year old girl who is killed after visiting her grandparents.

I found the first episode unengaging. You already know what's going to happen because of the publicity.

When Kiri goes missing,

the assumption is that her violent father has abducted her with the aid of the grandparents.

This could play to stereotypes about black men being dangerous criminals.

But there have also been hints that Kiri's white foster mother is involved.

Sarah Lancashire plays Miriam, the social worker responsible for Kiri.

The first episode was when Miriam visits her mother. It seemed to show that family life isn't always great.



Miriam, played by Sarah Lancashire

The show does descend into cliché. Miriam's a bit eccentric, a bit tough and she drinks. But it does show what social workers face whenever something

goes wrong. Miriam and her line manager battle to escape the blame for Kiri's death.

There's a political row underlying the tragedy.

Were social workers being "lefty" by letting Kiri visit her black grandparents unsupervised?

Was this about letting her "know where she comes from" before being permanently adopted by a white family? Should white people adopt black kids?

It's not yet clear how the drama will handle these issues. And the characters aren't developed enough—nor the plot—to say whether Kiri will get more interesting.

Sadie Robinson

EXHIBITION

ILLUMINATING INDIA: PHOTOGRAPHY 1857-2017

Science Museum, London, until 31 March
Free, but booking required.
Go to sciencemuseum.org.uk

THE BRITISH ruling class love a gory story, especially if they are the centre of attention.

In the wake of the 1857 Indian War of Independence—or Mutiny, as they would have it—the recently developed art of photography was despatched to India to record the devastation caused by soldiers revolting against their white officers.

Ruined garrisons and battle-scarred fortresses were captured and turned into postcards.

So successful were the photographs that soon a tourist industry developed, allowing wealthy Brits to make a pilgrimage to the sites of various outrages.

See the postcard snaps in this exhibition, and much more besides.

Yuri Prasad

DOCUMENTARY

WORKING CLASS WHITE MEN

Tuesdays at 10pm on Channel 4 and online at 4OD

THE PROBLEM with this programme is in its conception.

The central narrative of *Working Class White Men* is one of individual solutions.

It actually draws you away from talking about class, because the working class of course is multicultural.

The political message is



Professor Green gets serious

very confused because the premise is a nonsense.

It gets slightly more interesting when Green explains that he grew up on a Hackney council estate and was the only white person in his school class. Racist behaviour was never a consideration.

Green also stands up to Britain First on a Rochdale demonstration. But the fascists get far too much publicity.

When all is said and done, reinforcing any idea of the "unique" experiences of "Working Class White Men" is downright dangerous.

Alan Kenny

U.S. right winger Mike Huckabee emerged from the latest Churchill film, *Darkest Hour*, to declare, “Churchill was hated by his own party, opposition party, and press. Feared by the King as reckless, and despised for his bluntness. But unlike Neville Chamberlain, he didn’t retreat. We had a Chamberlain for 8 yrs; in @realDonaldTrump we have a Churchill.”

Brian Cox won awards for having jowls last year and Gary Oldman will do the same this year. That’s not to mention the blitz of Dunkirk or the hundreds of books that are spewed out.

It is a curious British cult, with Vera Lynn singing, Spitfires flying over Dover and Dad’s Army seen as a documentary. Like all cults it is built on a myth.

In fact, far from Churchill being hated by the press, he was friends with the most powerful press barons. He wrote his way out of his chronic overspending by appearing at length in their newspapers.

Though he was hated more than is usually mentioned.

The black revolutionary CLR James noted that Churchill’s own view of himself was that, “He is the only authentic ‘great man’ of the world bourgeoisie”.

But in truth, “Winston Churchill had established himself as the most discredited, the most untrustworthy, and the most irresponsible of all the senior politicians in England.

“The rulers of Britain did not take him seriously on the politics of war because they did not take him seriously on anything except his capacity to make a serious nuisance of himself.”

Headlines

He was brutal to suffragettes. And during a police siege he ordered firefighters not to put out a fire in a building with anarchists inside—they died and he got headlines.

As home secretary he became fascinated by eugenics and seriously urged the sterilisation of the “unfit”.

He was secretary of state for war when Britain formed the paramilitary “Black and Tans” that rampaged brutally across Ireland.

In later life Churchill worried that nuclear weapons would mean the end—not of life—but the splendour of war.

To be fair, during this and his famous dirges on the Cold War and the European Union he was thoroughly drugged up on top of his permanent drunkenness. Truly a great Briton.

Churchill was fascinated by soldiering. But he seems to have gone to officers’ training school Sandhurst only because his father thought he was too stupid for Oxford. Ordinary



A YOUNG Winston in his military finery

CHURCHILL THE RACIST WAR-DOG

As the the latest film about Churchill is released, **Simon Basketter** looks at a life that is the embodiment of colonial rule, incompetence and imperialist ambition



A statue in Chingford shows Churchill in an undignified position

soldiering in India he found boring, apart from the polo, which he played often.

He liked it best when charging around on horses either at foxes or foreigners, especially when others could see him.

Self-promoting and tenuous war journalism made his name, boosted his bank balance and launched him into parliament.

He didn’t exactly rough it. Everywhere he went during the First World War “a long bath and a boiler for heating the

“

In times of peace he had nothing to offer his class but dated rhetoric

bath water” were dragged along after him by horses. He and his fellow officers ate oysters and drank champagne.

He wrote to his wife, “I love this war. I know it’s smashing and shattering the lives of thousands every moment—and yet—I can’t help it—I enjoy every second of it.”

In 1918 he wrote from the Ritz Hotel, “I am trying also to arrange to give the Germans a good first dose of the Mustard gas before the end of the month.

Their whining in defeat is very gratifying to hear.”

In 1920 Churchill ordered the RAF to use poison gas against Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq. He said, “I do not understand this squeamishness about the use of gas. I am strongly in favour of using poison gas against uncivilised tribes.”

He was obsessed with finding the sudden attack that would topple the enemy.

Disaster

He was repeatedly wrong whenever he got his way. Invariably others died.

The Dardanelles expedition in 1915 was the most notorious of these, where he oversaw pointless disaster in Gallipoli. But thousands of lives were worth the gamble.

If Gallipoli fell so would Istanbul, opening up the road to Mosul, Baghdad and the Caspian oil city of Baku. It didn’t. He repeated the mistake often.

In times of peace and quiet he had nothing to offer his class but dated rhetoric, but in a crisis he offered decisiveness.

He learnt his simplistic imperialism at Harrow public school. It was a world view that the British Empire was a good thing and needed to be defended at all costs.

Over five million people died during the Bengal famine in 1943. There was grain stored in India—but it was not released.

Churchill said Indians were used to starving. He said, “I hate Indians. They are a beastly people with a beastly religion.”

He claimed to be a friend of the workers. He always referred to them as living in “their cottages”. If some reforms were forced so be it, but armed response was the preferred option.

IN 1911 transport workers walked out on strike for better pay, conditions and for union recognition.

In response he sent in troops to help rail bosses. A gun boat was positioned in the river Mersey. More than 50,000 troops were mobilised.

They opened fire on civilians in Liverpool and Llanelli—four were killed. Just a year earlier Churchill sent troops to threaten striking miners in Tonypandy in Wales.

He oversaw the invasion of Russia after the revolution and his hostility to Bolshevism ran deep.

And he wasn’t averse to liking fascists. Speaking to Italian fascist dictator Benito Mussolini in Rome in 1927 he said, “Your movement has rendered a service to the whole world.

“If I had been an Italian I should have been wholeheartedly with you from start to finish in your triumphant struggle against the bestial passions of Leninism.”

He wrote that Hitler “had a perfect right to be a patriotic German if he chose. I also

wanted England, Germany and France to be friends.”

When the British establishment wanted to throw out King Edward because he was too keen on Nazi Germany’s expansion plans, Churchill stood by him.

Overall the British ruling class was extremely reluctant to fight Hitler, partly out of ideological sympathy but mainly because they feared the cost and disruption of an all-out conflict.

It took the military disasters of 1940 to shock a majority of them into a realisation that, unless they mobilised seriously, they risked losing the empire.

The pompous rhetoric of Churchill fitted in the months between Dunkirk and the Blitz.

Famously he said, “I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat.” Not his, of course, but the myth was born.

The reality was grubbier. He argued that a revolutionary situation was developing in the country.

He wanted the suspension of parliament, the introduction of martial law and the formation of a committee of public safety armed with dictatorial powers.

Wiser minds saw that getting the unions and Labour on board to a national government would better hold back unrest.

He also didn’t rush to defend the white cliffs of Dover.

Instead Churchill ordered the British forces in Egypt to protect the Suez Canal and the imperial link with India.

Meanwhile Australian, New Zealand and Indian forces were ordered to the Middle East, exposing those countries to a Japanese attack.

As late as 1944 Churchill resisted the Allied assault on France in favour of concentrating on the Mediterranean.

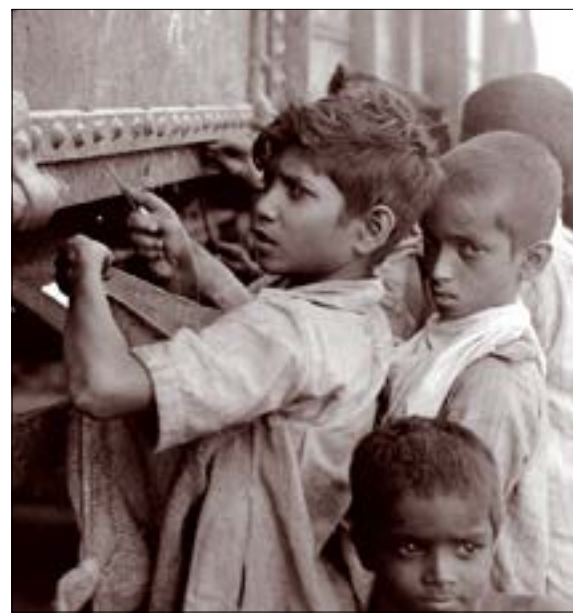
He saw it as key to British interests and thought it could forestall Russian expansion into Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

Resistance

Those soldiers fighting on what Churchill called the “soft underbelly” probably didn’t see it like that.

After the Second World War in Greece he rearmed the fascist troops, and British soldiers took on the resistance on his orders.

He saw history in terms of the



Children piercing grain cars during the Bengal famine in 1943 (top) Churchill’s state funeral in 1965 (above) Gary Oldman in *Darkest Hour* (below)

deeds of “heroes”. So he wrote, or had assistants write, very lengthy histories with him at the centre.

He acted as his own spin doctor. But it wasn’t always successful.

The war was no sooner over than he aroused new hostility by saying on the radio that the victory of the Labour Party would mean a Gestapo for Britain.

When he came to Walthamstow stadium in east London 1945, he was jeered by 20,000 people. And when he went to Ladbroke Grove in west London in the same year people threw rocks.

He died in 1965 and a state funeral of much pomp helped prolong the myth.

The sooner that myth is buried the better.

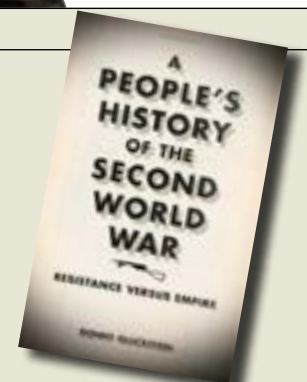
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● **Winston Churchill** by CLR James bit.ly/2vrtuvx

● **A band of brothers?** by Michael Bradley bit.ly/2mtrMqP

● **A People’s History of the Second World War** by Donny Gluckstein £19.99

Available at Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to bookmarksbookshop.co.uk



MARX AT 200

Why workers have the power to change the world

This year marks 200 years since Karl Marx’s birth. **Sadie Robinson** explains why workers are central in the first of an occasional series

KARL MARX saw workers as the key to transforming the world. For Marx—a revolutionary from Germany—the working class was the “gravedigger of capitalism”.

Marx’s analysis of capitalist society led him to see that workers have a unique position within it. He described how the main divide in capitalism is between bosses and workers.

Bosses own the means of production, such as offices, factories and machinery. Meanwhile workers are forced to sell their labour power to the bosses in order to live. Capitalism turns them into a commodity.

Workers aren’t paid the full value of what they create. This exploitation is at the heart of the social relationship between bosses and workers.

It means that workers are short-changed, but it also gives them immense potential power.

Collective

Capitalism can only exist if bosses successfully exploit workers’ labour. So if workers refuse to work, they can bring the entire system to a halt.

They have a collective power that marks them out from other classes.

But workers can do more than stop capitalism. They can build a classless world that is free from exploitation altogether.

Marx described how human history is full of this kind of class struggle.

These have been the driving force of human history, ushering in new kinds of societies. For instance the bourgeoisie, or capitalists, were a revolutionary class compared to the feudal lords that came before them.

Capitalism saw an enormous development of production that underpinned a fundamental



Workers are now the majority of the world’s population

transformation of society. But Marx explained how, once capitalism was established, the bourgeoisie became a block on further progress.

“At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production,” said Marx. “From forms of development of the productive forces, these relations turn into their fetters.”

We can see this today. Capitalism has generated the economic potential to meet the basic needs of everyone on the planet—and more. But the way production is organised—with profit-making before all else—stops this potential from being reached.

Marx argued that the working class has the power to sweep this society away and establish “true democracy”.

In the Communist Manifesto, Marx and Frederick Engels wrote, “The proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class.” They didn’t reach this

conclusion by simply observing workers. Marx and Engels helped set up and were part of several organisations that focused on working class struggle and included workers in their ranks.

Organisation

This also meant Marx was aware of problems in advancing the workers’ cause. The Communist Manifesto notes that the organisation of workers “is continually being upset by the competition between the workers themselves”.

But Marx maintained that only workers could free themselves—no one could do it for them. He argued that in struggle the working class would become a “class for itself”, one that consciously fights for its own interests.

And the process of revolution would not only transform the world but also the workers who made it. Marx wrote that only through revolution can the working class “succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew”.

Today the working class makes up the majority of the world’s population. When the Communist Manifesto was written in 1848, it was a tiny minority. But even then Marx and Engels could see that this class had the potential to end exploitation and class division for good.

“The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains,” they wrote. “They have a world to win.”

“

Workers can build a classless society that is free from exploitation

Union calls on members to reject the pay offer in local government

by SARAH BATES

THE UNITE union is calling on its members in English and Welsh local government to reject their pay offer in a consultative ballot.

Over a million council workers and schools staff have been offered a 2 percent “rise” for each of the next two years.

That’s still far less than the rate of inflation, and is therefore a pay cut in real terms.

There is some extra money for the very lowest paid, but not nearly enough.

In addition the money will have to come from existing budgets—that means job and service cuts elsewhere.

Unite national officer for local authorities, Jim Kennedy, said, “Our members simply do not believe that the offer will result in enough of them receiving a pay increase which is at least in line with inflation.

“Local government has



NO TO the public sector pay cap

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

been decimated by the Conservative’s cuts and any pay settlement should be fully funded by central government.”

Meanwhile the GMB union is not recommending

its members accept or reject the offer but says there is “no appetite” for industrial action “at this stage”.

The key decision will be made by members of Unison, which is by far the biggest

local government union. It is holding a series of regional consultation meetings this month.

All the unions expect to finish their pay consultations by early March.

It is vital that activists, whichever union they are in, demand a fight against this pay-cutting deal—and prepare for strikes.

Welcome

Unite’s call for rejection is welcome, but it must be part of a sustained campaign.

Unions in other areas of the public sector such as the NHS and the civil service need to fight as well.

Meanwhile local government unions in Scotland are pushing for a 6.5 percent increase or £1,500 a year, whichever is greater.

Johanna Baxter, Unison head of local government bargaining, said, “This claim is both realistic and in line with the government’s stated objective of lifting the pay

cap for public sector workers.”

Presumably a similar claim should be fought for south of the border then as well.

The Scottish National Party government says it wants the 1 percent pay cap to go.

But it adds that it’s up to the councils to find the cash for a pay rise.

A Scottish government spokesperson said, “Pay and other employment issues for local government are matters for local authorities” and that councils could use their powers to raise council tax.

Council leaders in the Cosla employers’ body say the Scottish government won’t give them the funds they need.

Cosla’s resources spokesperson, councillor Gail Macgregor, said, “As employers, our pay awards have to be both sustainable and affordable.”

It will take a fight to win the rise above inflation that council workers need.

Facts that show there needs to be a real fight

- Local government workers have undergone a 22 percent cut in real basic pay since 2010.
- There have been eight years of government-imposed pay restraint, which has seen wages either frozen or held to a 1 percent increase.
- Women make up almost four-fifths (78 percent) of the workforce, and tend to be on the very lowest pay scales.
- The Tories will have cut local government budgets by around 75 percent by 2020.
- Around 800,000 local government jobs have gone since 2010.
- The TUC trade union federation has called a demonstration on 12 May for a “new deal for working people”. Go to bit.ly/2DeQZ2H

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Big strikes in Germany get bosses on the run

Strikes by metal workers have the power to hurt German capital, says **Tomáš Tengely-Evans**

A SERIES of strikes by tens of thousands of metal workers are showing the potential power of the German working class.

From steel giant ThyssenKrupp to luxury car maker Porsche, thousands of workers walked out across 360 companies on Monday.

Up to 75,000 have struck so far and the IG Metall union has threatened an all-out strike if bosses don't meet their demands.

The union is demanding an above-inflation 6 percent pay rise for 3.9 million workers and workers' right to reduce their weekly working hours from 35 to 28. Because pay would fall unions want a £200 a month pay rise for those looking after parents and children.

With export industries booming and unemployment at an all-time low, unions see this as an opportunity to push for higher wages and better conditions. And bosses are worried that they won't be able to discipline the workforce.

Heiner Dribbusch from the WSI union think tank explained, "It is no longer the case that there are 100,000 unemployed workers waiting outside factory gates."

"Companies are complaining about the lack of qualified labour in Germany."

Capacity

The number of jobs being advertised in the metal industry is higher than official unemployment figures. Around 22 percent of companies are unable to produce to full capacity.

Economic growth, as well as austerity and bosses' attacks, can fuel workers' confidence to fight.

German capitalism is supposedly built on a "partnership model" between bosses, unions and government.

A complex set of collective bargaining agreements—in industries, regions and firms—regulate terms and conditions.

Unions jockey for position and often hold "warning strikes" whenever the agreements are up for renewal. This round of negotiations

BACK STORY

Up to 75,000 workers have been part of strikes in Germany

- Their IG Metall union wants a 6 percent pay rise and a cut in working hours

- Bosses are nervous and are already complaining that there aren't enough workers

- The strikes show the potential power of workers—and that growth can give them confidence

- But union leaders want to keep the 'social partnership' with bosses, and could compromise

could be sharper because of underlying problems in German capitalism.

The metal workers' dispute has brought the battles over the length of the working day to the fore for the first time in over a decade.

Battles over the working day raise the question, "Who gets the profits workers create?"

Since before the global crisis of 2007 bosses have tried to squeeze more out of workers to keep their profits up, which has hollowed out social partnership.

Bosses' organisations have given firms opt-out memberships since the 1990s. This means they're not bound by industry-level agreements with unions. Gesamtmetall, the bosses' organisation fighting IG Metall's demands, highlights this.

At the beginning of the century all of its 6,252 members were part of collective bargaining agreements with unions. By 2013 just over half of its 6,826 members were in such agreements.

IG Metall is in a potentially powerful position to hurt German capital.

A breakthrough for metal workers would be important for the whole working class.



STRIKERS WANT a better work-life balance

PICTURE: IG METALL/FICKER

Coalition government—and unions' compromise—is disaster for the left

IG METALL leaders are keen for a swift resolution to their dispute.

Union leader Jorg Hofmann said that "a brief and strong struggle would perhaps be better for both sides".

"We want to achieve our demands and ensure the production stoppages are manageable for the employers," he said.

This is partly because union leaders are determined to cling onto social partnership with the bosses.

But it's also more fundamental. Union leaders fear that workers' struggle could derail coalition talks between the conservative Christian Democrats (CDU) and Labour-type Social Democrats (SPD).

Blueprint

The CDU and SPD agreed a blueprint for further negotiations late last week.

The breakthrough means that although they are still a long way from forming a coalition they hope to move to formal talks.

Reiner Hoffmann, DGB union federation leader, said a coalition would give "a good perspective for Germany and Europe".



German chancellor Angela Merkel

In reality it would be a disaster for the left and the working class.

It would make the far right Alternative for Germany (AfD) the largest opposition party in parliament.

Its election breakthrough marked the first time Nazis have been in the parliament since the end of the Second World War.

The AfD is built on racism against refugees and has been shifting rightwards.

Around half of its 92 MPs are Nazis—and fascists are taking over key leadership positions and local party organisations.

Its rise followed a general shift to the right in German society in

the aftermath of the refugee crisis.

Refugees marching down Europe's motorways and a widespread mood of solidarity forced chancellor Angela Merkel to let in one million people.

But the right was quick to go on the attack and Merkel responded by pandering to racism.

Bitterness

The AfD also fed off a deep bitterness at the base of society, mainly in the former East Germany. The Die Linke party has been part of regional governments in the poorer east that have pushed through privatisation.

This blunted the left's ability to put forward an alternative.

The SPD paid for pushing through attacks on working class people, polling just 21 percent at federal elections last September.

Its leaders ruled out going back into coalition with Merkel—then changed their minds.

Yet Merkel plans more austerity and closer integration with the European Union bosses' club.

Putting forward a socialist, anti-racist alternative—and working class struggle—can shift the situation to the left.



On other pages...

Trump—a year of horror and resistance >> Pages 10&11

IN BRIEF

Stop the EDL's fake 'meet and greet'

THE ENGLISH Defence League (EDL) has called a regional demonstration in Hexthorpe, Doncaster, this Saturday. The Nazi group says its "meet and greet" will take place from 2pm.

Unite Against Fascism has called a counter-protest in the town from 11am. It is backed by Doncaster TUC.

The protest comes as the EDL faces further splits and crisis. North East EDL leader Alan Spence has been kicked out of the organisation.

The EDL Newcastle Division made a statement confirming there had been a vote of no confidence against Spence due to his "lack of leadership".

●Go to Unite Against Fascism on Facebook for more details

Workers walk out, bosses' profits tank

UNITE UNION members at Sutton Tankers in Cheshire were planning a continuous strike from Friday. They returned a 100 percent vote for strikes on a 97 percent turnout.

Bosses planned to sack over 30 workers this Friday and to re-employ them in February on worse contracts.

Engineers generate job loss resistance

HUNDREDS OF workers at an engineering company are preparing to strike over job losses. The Unite union members voted by 93 percent on a 91 percent turnout to strike over plans to get rid of 300 jobs.

Bosses at Cummins Generator Technologies in Stamford made a revised offer following the vote.

Amazon bogus self employment victory

WORKERS FOR Amazon have won up to £20,000 in back pay after a legal challenge to their employment status.

UK Express, which Amazon uses to deliver its packages, was found to use bogus self-employment to avoid paying its workers sick pay, holiday pay and paid breaks.

The employer backed down before the legal challenge got to an employment tribunal.

School strike to stop academisation

NEU UNION members at The Village School in Brent, west London, began a two-day strike on Tuesday. Workers are fighting a plan to turn the school into an academy that would be part of a Multi Academy Trust.

Workers previously held a successful strike against the proposal in December. Resistance to academisation boosted the union's membership from 32 in September to 125 before December's strike.

PALESTINE SOLIDARITY



SOME 120 people marched through Portsmouth city centre on Saturday of last week in solidarity with the Palestinian resistance. The march was called by Portsmouth and South Downs Palestine Solidarity Campaign in opposition to Trump's declaration about Jerusalem being the capital of Israel.

PICTURE: JON WOODS

NHS CAMPAIGNS

Build the 3 February NHS demo in London

by TOMAŠ TENGELY-EVANS

AN URGENT call to resist the Tories' attacks on the NHS went out from a health campaigners' meeting in London on Thursday of last week.

Called by the People's Assembly and Health Campaigns Together, it discussed how to build the biggest possible NHS demonstration on 3 February.

Tom from north west London told *Socialist Worker*, "This is a life and death situation for the NHS".

Tens of thousands of people could descend on central London for the demonstration, piling pressure on Theresa May.

Activists discussed helping health workers leaflet hospitals, a bus tour around London and

a social media campaign to get the message out.

The Tories are scapegoating migrants for the NHS crisis.

SUTR has organised a Migrants Make Our NHS bloc on the 3 February demonstration. Activists also argued that it was important to get Labour and the unions to throw their weight

behind the demonstration.

Labour plans a national campaigning day for the NHS on 20 January, and a rally with Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell on 25 January.

Some people at the meeting urged that the fight has to happen now and that we can't afford to wait for a Labour government.

WHITTINGTON HOSPITAL

OVER 120 people joined a public meeting last Thursday to demand Whittington Hospital bosses stop working with a firm linked to the Grenfell Tower fire. It was called by the Defend the Whittington Hospital Coalition.

Bosses are working with Ryhurst to revamp the north London hospital. Ryhurst is a subsidiary of Grenfell renovator Rydon.

At the meeting everyone supported improvements to our hospital, but did not want Ryhurst to be involved.

Hospitals have to sell off their own land to pay for redevelopment. Ryhurst and any other future private developers would be paid for their work out of this selloff.

It's not too late for this contract to be cancelled, contrary to the board's claims. **Shirley Franklin**

POSTAL WORKERS

Strike threat led to gains

POSTAL workers' CWU union officials have revealed details of a possible deal with Royal Mail bosses that could end a major dispute over pensions, pay and conditions.

A report by the union's London Division from a senior reps meeting confirmed that bosses had agreed to put in a single pensions scheme for all workers. It also said that there had been "progress on pay." And it suggested that management are ready to accept a shorter working week of 35 hours, and that they have dropped plans to introduce a 9-5 shift pattern.

These are big retreats from some of the major attacks

that Royal Mail had originally planned. That's because of the huge vote for strikes—almost 90 percent.

Action is key to the union's strength. Around 30 CWU members at a delivery office in Wallasey, Merseyside, walked out last Thursday over the way they were treated by management.

The CWU must call action if it cannot get an agreement that:

- Protects all of its members' pensions
- Includes an above inflation pay deal
- Guarantees no changes to deliveries that disrupt workers' lives

FURTHER EDUCATION

Vote for pensions strikes

A BALLOT of UCU union members for strikes over pensions was set to end on Friday. Workers at some 68 universities across Britain are balloting to stop an attack on their USS pension scheme.

Employers want the defined benefit scheme to become a defined contribution one—slashing the value of the pensions.

The union's Higher Education Committee is set to discuss the ballot result on Monday. If workers vote for strikes, the union could call escalating action of up to four or five days a week throughout February.

The ballot is disaggregated, so each

institution's vote will be counted separately. There is a risk that some branches will just miss reaching the 50 percent turnout threshold the Tories have imposed on unions.

But if there's a vote for strikes the union should call them—and before negotiations with bosses end on Tuesday. Escalating action has the power to stop their assault on pensions.

●Shadow chancellor John McDonnell will speak at a UCU London region rally on Wednesday 17 January, 7pm, Cruciform Building (LT1), UCL, Gower St, WC1E 6BT. Read the new USS pamphlet at uculeft.org/2018/01/pamphlet-defending-uss-pensions

Ballot can deliver walkouts

A BALLOT for strikes over pay was set to begin in further education colleges on Tuesday of next week. It runs until 12 February.

Bosses have offered UCU union members an insulting 1 percent pay offer. But the union said workers have suffered a real terms pay cut of 23.6 percent since 2008.

The branches so far authorised to ballot are Capital City College Group, South Thames College Group, United College Group, New City College, Croydon College, Epping Forest College, Havering College, Lambeth College, Richmond Upon Thames College, Sandwell College, Sunderland College and Sussex Coast College Hastings.

A consultation last year

saw UCU members back strikes over pay by 75 percent. Workers now need to organise to ensure the maximum turnout in the ballot.

UCU activists are encouraging meetings and local pay rallies where possible with other unions.

■UCU HAS suspended action short of a strike at the University of Manchester for more talks. Union members there held a successful two-day strike in October over job cuts.

Following the strike, bosses said no academics would be made compulsorily redundant.

Yet one worker still faces compulsory redundancy at the university. **Sadie Robinson**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Glasgow pay campaign

LOW-PAID women workers have been fighting for years to get Glasgow City Council to implement single status agreements.

The Unison and GMB union members are keeping the pressure on the SNP-led council which has dragged the dispute through the courts. A court of session rejected the council's case, but they may take it to the Supreme Court.

A Unison rep told *Socialist Worker* they hope bosses will "choose to sit round the table with the unions and sort this out finally. The anger is incredible, and if they don't resolve this there's going to be demands for a strike ballot."

●Equal pay or we walk away demo Saturday 10 February, 11am, Glasgow Green G1 5DB

ANTI-FRACKING

Protest in York

OVER 50 protesters gathered outside York Magistrates' Court on 11 January to support 30 anti-fracking protesters facing charges. Trial dates have been set for April and May.

The anti-frackers have been charged with various offenses following demonstrations against the new KM8 fracking well at Kirby Misperton. **Chris Fuller**

FIGHTING THE CUTS

Bradford children's services at risk

PROTESTS WILL take on Bradford council's cuts to children's services.

Bradford People's Assembly has called a demonstration for 10 February to bring together families, activists, trade unions and others.

Bradford Council wants to axe nearly 500 jobs and move Prevention and Early Help to a "locality-based" system.

■CONSTRUCTION workers plan a series of walkouts as part of a separate dispute over the sacking of a shop steward. The Unite union members, who work for DSD Construction, are set to strike next Tuesday and on 1 and 7 February.

TRANSPORT

Strikers bring train lines to a standstill

by SARAH BATES

TRAIN WORKERS brought networks to a standstill last week as part of their fight against driver only operation (DOO).

Workers from Northern, Merseyrail, Greater Anglia, South Western and Island Line struck last Monday, Wednesday and Friday. RMT union members from Southern joined them on the walkout on Monday.

One striker from South Western told Socialist Worker, "We're pushing the government back."

"There have been lots of cancellations. The managers pretend they can still run the service, but they can't."

Strikers at Wigan station persuaded some drivers in the Aslef union to respect the picket line last Monday.

Picketed

At Manchester Victoria around 20 strikers picketed—and 100 percent of union members came out on strike.

Bosses have gone to extraordinary lengths to keep some services running.

Northern network journeys were split into four different parts—so that management could claim they were running four journeys



CONFIDENT STIKERS in Fratton, near Portsmouth

PICTURE: JON WOODS

instead of one. And Greater Anglia was able to run the most comprehensive strike timetable—because it insists on staffing trains with scab managers.

Safety-critical staff usually have nine months of safety training, but some scabs receive just two days.

Some 90 percent of stations in Greater Manchester are unstaffed—which makes the role of the guard essential to ensure safe and accessible travel.

Tory transport secretary Chris Grayling is determined to push through the Tories' vision of privatisation and deregulation.

But determined rail workers last week showed that they are ready to fight back.

■ A LONG-RUNNING dispute on Arriva Cross Country could be coming to an end following "significant" talks.

RMT union members walked out for six days last November and December in a

dispute over Sunday working and abuse of rostering.

■ TSSA union members on Arriva Cross Country have voted to strike over pay.

Train managers not covered by collective bargaining voted by 71 percent on a 74 percent turnout to fight a two tier pay system. They were transferred from Central Trains some ten years ago.

Up until last year, all train managers would receive the same pay increase.

BUS WORKERS

Picket line drama sees protests stop scab buses

FIRST MANCHESTER bus drivers were set to walk out on Monday, Wednesday and Friday of next week as part of their long-running fight for pay parity.

Workers at other First Manchester depots can be paid up to £5,000 more for doing the same job.

The Unite union members at the Rusholme depot are striking on those days every other week.

There were dramatic scenes outside the depot during their last set of walkouts as protesters stopped scab buses.

Managers were desperate to keep some services running and resorted to sneaking a scab driver out of a different gate.

But only four buses left the depot in the first three hours of last Wednesday's strike—a much reduced service.

Police were called and pushed protesters out of the way, later bundling two people into a police van.

The solidarity demonstrations show the potential for unity—and have a huge impact on strikers' morale.

Regular visits from trade unionists and supporters have given vital solidarity.

Driver Robert said strikers could have "folded after a few weeks without all this support".

Several strikers said that "more political pressure" is key to winning the dispute.

"Having someone like Jeremy Corbyn or John McDonnell on the picket line would really make a difference," said Robert.

"But I get the feeling Corbyn holds back a bit now, because he's due to be the next prime minister."

FUJITSU

Defend Fujitsu union reps

UNITE UNION members at Fujitsu have announced a series of strikes—as bosses dismissed victimised rep Ian Allinson. The first walkout will begin on Wednesday 24 January.

Management disgracefully gave Ian his notice of dismissal while he was on compassionate leave to attend a family funeral. Bosses dismissed another

rep on 28 December—and told them their last day of work would be 31 December.

Ian told Socialist Worker, "If bosses can get away with treating people this way and victimising reps, it's a very dangerous sign for the future."

"Even if I'm not successful we have got to defend workplace organisation, because there are further attacks in the pipeline."

CINEMA WORKERS

High stakes in cinema fight

PICTUREHOUSE cinema workers plan to strike for 13 days from Saturday as part of their long-running battle for the living wage.

The members of the Bectu arm of the Prospect union will strike across five sites in London.

It comes as the chain's bosses step up their campaign against workers.

Managers at the Ritzy cinema in Brixton have

announced the cinema will be closed for the entire period from Saturday until 1 February, not just during strike hours as before.

Workers are asking for their supporters in the trade union movement to raise strike funds.

They have already raised over £20,000.

●To donate to the strike fund go to bit.ly/2r88ewX Alistair Farrow

HOUSING

Labour limits in Haringey

LABOUR-RUN Haringey council's outgoing right wing leadership has laid the basis for pushing through the Haringey Development Vehicle (HDV).

The £22 billion project with private developer Lendlease would see the demolition of seven estates in north London.

The Labour right lost a series of selection battles, choosing council candidates for local elections in May.

Now the right wants to tie the hands of incoming left wing councillors who won selection by opposing the HDV.

A motion calling on council leader Claire Kober not to sign any further HDV documents before the May elections was defeated by 24 votes to 22 last Tuesday.

It shows that the fight against the HDV cannot be won through manoeuvres inside Labour.

The campaign must keep up the pressure to force the council to scrap the HDV.

■ OVER 120 people discussed plans to redevelop large parts of Walthamstow town centre in north east London last week.

The redevelopment would take up a third of the town square and include only 20 percent "affordable" housing.

Future plans include occupying the square on 24 February, taking protests to the developers' offices and doorknocking residents to raise awareness.

Sean Dewey and Claire Chandler

CONSTRUCTION



EIGHTY ELECTRICIANS working on the Woolwich section of the Crossrail project in south east London struck last week. The Unite union members' dispute centres on completion payments such as finishing bonuses.

PICTURE: ALAN KENNY

WOMEN'S AID

PROTESTERS WILL gather in Doncaster, South Yorkshire, on Saturday 27 January to defend Louise Harrison and South Yorkshire Women's Aid (SYWA).

Louise is a domestic violence worker and campaigner in the town. But her work contract may not be renewed. Louise has

helped to lead campaigns to defend SYWA and other services in Doncaster.

Shadow chancellor John McDonnell has sent his "support and solidarity" to the campaign to defend Louise.

●Protest Saturday 27 January, 12 noon, Mansion House, Doncaster

CARE WORKERS

Fight to save care homes

OVER 60 people attended a public meeting held by the Save Our Bield campaign in Glasgow last Saturday.

They are fighting to stop care firm Bield closing up to 12 care homes.

The Unison union has said the closures would be "a disaster" with 160 older people losing their care homes places. And

Unison said the closures mean up to 200 compulsory redundancies. There were speakers from Unison, Social Work Action Network, the Labour Party and friends and relatives of residents of Bield Housing Association.

There were moving testimonies about how a care home closure would affect residents.

Mother of Becky Romero leads protest and appeals to activists...

'UNITE TO STOP TORY NHS CUTS'

by TOMÁŠ TENGELY-EVANS

THE MOTHER of Becky Romero, a 15 year old who died last July because of mental health cuts, has slammed underfunding of services as "utterly shameful".

She has called on people to join the demonstration for the NHS on 3 February in London.

"Children are dying," Nicky Romero told a rally of family and supporters in Bristol last Saturday. "If there was enough money Becky would be here."

The Avon Coroner ruled that a lack of NHS resources saw a "gross failure to provide basic medical attention" to Becky and "contributed to her death by neglect".

Overlooked

Nicky told Socialist Worker, "We feel so let down, Becky was overlooked. Becky didn't get the help she needed."

Tony Romero, Becky's father, told Socialist Worker, "The government needs to wake up and realise that there are thousands of children like



BECKY ROMERO'S mother (second left) and father (far right) are fighting to defend the NHS

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

Becky. No parent should have to go through it."

Nicky and Tony were both clear about who is to blame for the crisis in mental health services. "It's not the staff's fault," said Nicky. "They were

doing their best to help, but there's not enough of them."

Becky was admitted to Bristol Children's Hospital last June, but lack of beds forced her to go 80 miles to Pebble Lodge in Bournemouth.

Riverside, the only adolescent mental health centre in Bristol, had just nine beds.

After being discharged from Pebble Lodge, Becky and her family were only given limited support.

Ashleigh, who was one of Becky's best friends at school, joined the protest. "I've never been taught anything about mental health at school," she told Socialist Worker.

"Children in schools need

to be taught it. And there needs to be more staff and support."

Since the coroner's ruling, health bosses have agreed to increase the number of beds from nine to 32 by March.

Campaign

Health activists in the city called a follow-up meeting for next Thursday to build the local campaign.

Labour, the unions and campaigners have to fight to push back the Tories' assault on the NHS.

The demonstration on 3 February is a key opportunity to build resistance (see page 18).

Nicky said, "I'm encouraging people to go. I keep sharing the event on Facebook. We've all got to stand together and get funding for the NHS."

See Facebook event Emergency Demonstration—NHS in Crisis: Fix it Now! and No cuts to mental health: Building the campaign for details of the demo and meeting

More online

For a longer version, go to bit.ly/2mAvXAF

HOME CARE

Hundreds of care workers set to strike in Birmingham over cuts and rotas

by SARAH BATES

HUNDREDS OF vital workers in Birmingham are striking to save a home care service from cuts.

Some 350 home care workers voted by 99 percent for strikes against redundancies and a punishing new rota system.

They've announced strikes for this Saturday (11am-2.30pm) and Tuesday 6 February (12 noon-2.30pm).

The workers are part of a home enablement team



Home care workers help people to be able to live independently

that cares for people in the first six weeks following discharge from hospital.

They help to give people the skills to live independently in their own home.

The council's plans will slash the number of home carers by 40 percent.

Wider cuts have seen the social care workforce drop from over 7,000 in 2010 to fewer than 2,000 now.

The Unison union members also face a new rota system that will see them work three separate split shifts in any one day.

The Labour-led council is proposing that carers work 7-10am, 12-2pm and 4-10pm.

Workers fear this could lead to mistakes being made.

Caroline Johnson, branch secretary of Birmingham Unison, said, "Our members love their work and want to provide the best care they can for our most vulnerable citizens."

"But staff know that if they are forced to work the new rotas they will be left exhausted with no time to recharge their batteries."

The home enablement team operates during evenings and weekends.

Carers are not paid extra for unsociable hours, or for their travel time.

Strikes by bin workers forced back some of Birmingham council's attacks last year.

Home care workers' strikes can do the same.

Send messages of support to info@birminghamunison.co.uk Make cheques payable to Birmingham Unison and make it clear it is for the hardship fund Join the strike rally—Saturday 20 January, 12 noon, Victoria Square, B1 1BD